HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DATA FROM THE BHAVISYA PURĀNA

25

RAJ KUMAR ARORA

The *Bhavisya Purāṇa* occupies an important position in the Puranic literature. It is exclusively devoted to the eulogy of the sun god who was considered as the highest deity. It is true that the sun was an object of worship by the Ṛg Vedic Aryans, but in course of time many legends and anecdotes gathered round his personality and his worship became more widespread. In popular Hinduism as symbolised by the growth of Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism this god became a very popular deity among a section of the people. As the hub of planetary life supposed to influence the destiny of individual and group entities it specially attracted the attention of astrologers and astronomers. As the name itself suggests, it dealt with prophesies of the future shape of things to come. It was the most important literary vehicle for the followers of the sun-cult to propagate their views.

The Magas of Iran, the counterparts of the Brāhmanas of India, and exponents of the cult of sun, came to India and gave this cult a new orientation. They added their beliefs, customs and allied matter pertaining to the sun cult in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. In this way, they propagated their own ideas through the instrumentality of this Purāṇa. Thus this text became an important cultural link between India and Iran.

Besides the cult of sun, this Purāṇa throws much light on other aspects of the social life of the Indians. The attitude of the author of this Purāṇa towards caste is liberal and they advocate that caste should be determined not by birth but on the basis of nature and worth of the individual. This Purāṇa gives a good position to woman in society and even recommends divorce in certain circumstances. The chapters on education throw some side light on the prevailing system of education of those times. This helps us to know about the gradation of teachers, teacher-taught relations, courses of study etc. The wages chart given in this Purāṇa adds to our economic data. Thus this Purāṇa brings into bold relief many important topics of those times which increase our knowledge of ancient Indian culture and civilisation.

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Dr. Raj Kumar Arora

STERLING PUBLISHERS (P) LTD
New Delhi-16 Jullundur-3

Historical and Cultural Data from the Bhavishya Purāṇa

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3139

STERLING PUBLISHERS (P) LTD
New Delhi-16 : AB/9, Safdarjang Enclave
Jullundur-3 : 695, Model Town

294.5925
Ar67h

First Edition 1972

Price Rs. 35.00

PRINTED IN INDIA

Published by Sh. S. K. Ghai, Managing Director, Sterling Publishers (P) Ltd., and printed by R. P. Printers at Shahdara Printing Press, Delhi-32

Dedicated to

Late Dr. Buddha Prakash

PREFACE

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is an important text of the Purāṇa literature. It has certain distinct peculiarities and characteristics which make it a class by itself among ancient Purāṇa lore. The socio cultural material contained in the extant recession of this Purāṇa has not been studied, sifted and analysed with thoroughness in spite of the fact that isolated references have been cited by various scholars and authorities here and there. The present thesis seeks to arrange and analyse the social and cultural data of this Purāṇa and to correlate them with parallel contemporaneous data gleaned from other historical and legendary texts and place this body of synthesised ideas against its proper perspective in India's cultural history. It is expected that the present attempt will serve a necessary purpose by bringing the aforesaid data of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* into bold relief.

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* in its extant form is a syncretic text. Some portions of this text undoubtedly date from the ancient period and it has been noted that the addition of material by accretion in this work continued until the last century as textual references to Queen Victavati (Victoria) indicate. It would thus appear that editors having recourse to isolated historical texts have not been meticulous enough to retain the ancient texts in their original form. The result has been that the historical section of this work bristles with inconsistent assemblage of fiction and legend which makes the reader, at times, sceptic to the veracity and authenticity of the whole text. The trustworthy account concerning the ancient period is scanty, references to episodes of medieval history are quite sketchy and no better than fairy tales ; the allusions to the British period are equally jejune. Therefore it is felt that from the historical point of view an effort to analyse or study this excretion of legendary lore of spurious nature is not going to serve any useful purpose. Likewise, the geographical information in the text does not add substantially to our extant knowledge. For instance, the identification of place names merely takes one over familiar and traversed ground surveyed in the works of standard authors on ancient geography. Neverthless the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is a veritable mine of information for social and cultural matters and the portions dealing with them are by and large authentic. Great attention has been paid to study and evaluate these portions which has resulted in the addition of our knowledge of important aspects of Indian civilisation, dim and hazy heretofore.

To begin with, an effort has been made to fix the chronological position of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.* Opinions are divided on the subject, as they are bound to be, but the author of this study has been able to show that the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* represents literary evolution of about 2000 years. It is first referred to in the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* circa 5th century B.C. However, it crystallised into its characteristic form in the Kuṣāṇa and the Gupta periods when the Maga Brāhmaṇas, possibly affiliated to their Iranian counterparts, adopted and adapted it to their own needs, outlook and conceptions. Important research work has been done on Maga Brāhmaṇas and on the cultural and social impact of Indo-Iranian relations in the historical past by eminent scholars in modern times. Though the present author has tried to keep himself abreast with the research about this aspect in the major European languages, but some of them are surely unavailable or inaccessible in this part of the country. Apart from that this study is not addressed to Iran and its social and religious history of the early period. A general background of and a passing reference to the relevant trends of the social and cultural history of Iran was quite sufficient to place the the data of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* in its proper perspective of historical relatedness. Since the main trend is on Indian socio-cultural factors, the author has tried to approach it from many sides and availed himself of the benefit of many works written on the subject.

The author's finding is that the Maga Brāhmaṇas, who were affiliated in value terms to Iran adopted the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* as their main text ; consequently the Purāṇa emphasizes the cult of sun worship in a manner that partakes of Iranian features. The legends of Zarathustra are elaborately incorporated in it. The peculiar iconography of the sun cult in its Iranian aspect has also been brought into focus to substantiate the point.

The Maga Brāhmaṇas had their peculiar views on the caste system, heaven & hell, dreams, the position of woman in family and society and the like. In the matter of caste the Purāṇa strikes a peculiarly revolutionary note. Hardly does one come across in the Purāṇas forth-right criticism and out spoken denunciation of the rigid and regimented social structure based upon birth, heredity or tradition. This feature marks out the Purāṇa as a sensitive and egalitarian contribution to Indian social history. In this book this section of the Purāṇa is elaborately dealt with against the background of the social development as regards the caste system in ancient India.

The Purāṇa gives some very important information on dreams, ideas of heaven and hell, and the solar cult. These topics were quite popular with the Magi of Iran. Though the tenor and setting is Indian, the origin and consensus could well be Iranian. The Purāṇa also confer privilges and assigns duties to woman in relation to the rest of the community in special sections. The emphasis on marriage, domestic functions and household work, show that the authors did not favour asceticism from domestic life. Zoroastrianism, as is well known stresses the sanctity or the sacramental character of life and the sanction for worldly duties which it enjoins. The Purāṇa has something specific to say about the right to divorce. It also lays great stress on the purity of a woman at the menstrual period. All these topics have been critically studied in the present work and often the information adds considerably to the knowledge of Indian life and culture of the period. Other topics like iconography, education, fasts and gifts, economic condition and temple architecture dealt within the Purāṇa have also been studied with reference to other cognate texts.

Thus a comprehensive picture of Indian society of those times has been pieced together from the data scattered here and there in the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.

It is quite well known that the Purāṇas represent an important stage in the evolution of Indian religion. They embody the Vedic view of life as enshrined in the Varṇāśramadharma, with the importation of new movements and ideals emanating from the heterodox circles and emphasizing the revolutionary egalitarian view of life. The Purāṇas fill the hiatus between the various syncretist elements. Many heterodox sects like the 'Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas have been reclaimed to the fold of orthodoxy through the media of the Purāṇas with the result that in course of time there remained no watertight distinctions between the orthodox and heterodox elements of Indian religions. The Varṇāśramadharma was accepted on the basis of all these religious cum cultural beliefs. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, too, played its role in bringing about this emergent synthesis. It brought together the solar cult of Indian complexion popularised by the Magas with the order of fasts, gifts and respect for higher classes. Thus it has its own contribution to make towards the synthesizing process of Indian religious life. The present study is therefore, calculated to evaluate the role of this Purāṇa in the socio-cultural life of the Indian people.

It is also hoped that this study by casting sidelight will enhance our knowledge of several other subjects with which the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* deals.

Before I end I must express my sincerest gratitude to my guide Late Sh. Buddha Prakash Ph.D ; D. Litt. whose help and encouragement were always forthcoming while I was engaged in the preparation of this work. I must also thank to the Librarian and staff of the Panjab University, Chandigarh and Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi, for allowing me to use their rare books. I am particularly thankful to Sh. Bhagvat of Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi for his prompt assistance to me in getting the required material. I am also much obliged to my wife Mrs. Anand Arora who has always attended to my personal needs and provided me with necessary amenities of life and thus facilitating the task of writing this book.

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HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DATA FROM THE BHAVIṢYA PURĀṆA

According to the *Nāradīya Purāṇa*, the Purāṇas are the essence of of the Vedas :

सर्व-वेदार्थ साराणि पुराणानीति भूपते ।।

Nāradīya Purāṇa, 1.9.100

Among some sections of the people, the importance of the Purāṇas was deemed to be even greater than that of the Vedas :

यो विद्याच्चतुरो वेदान्साङ्गोपनिषदो द्विजः ।
न चेत् पुराणं संविद्यान्नैव स स्याद्विचक्षणः ।।

Vāyu Purāṇa, 1, 200-1

इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपवृंहयेत् ।
विभेत्मल्पश्रुताद्वदो मामयं प्रहरिष्यति।।

Padma Purāṇa, v. 2, 5, 2

The Brāhmaṇa, who may know the four Vedas with the Angas and Upaniṣads, should not really be [regarded as] having attained proficiency, if he does not thoroughly know the Purāṇas. He should reinforce [his knowledge of] the Veda with the Itihāsa and Purāṇa. "The Veda is afraid of him who is deficient in the tradition, [thinking] 'He will do me hurt'."[4] Thus the Purāṇas contain a large number of subjects which interested the average person of ancient times. Significantly enough, the Purāṇas acted as a link between the orthodox culture and religion based upon Śruti and Smṛti, and heterodox popular religions like Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and the like, possessing their own canonical works, and did much to preserve the traditional socio-cultural outlook. They have also served to give content to ancient Vedic ideas, transmuting them into myth and fable, facilitating the transition from the old to the new and serving to further the cause of Hinduism through history. In this way the Purāṇas can be said to have built upon the Vedic base a superstructure suited to its own moral needs and immediacy of purpose.

That the Purāṇas were addressed to the common people, insofar as that was practicable, determined their scope. Thus many technical disciplines requiring specialised training in areas of limited scope, such as medicine, astronomy, metallurgy, mathematics, were precluded from their ambit. But all this did not detract from their comprehensive and encyclopaedic nature. "Not only Vedic metaphysics, mythology and cosmogony, not only the great legends of the Brāhmaṇas, not only the accumulated religious traditions of India, not only the multiple cults, but also history, culture, chronology, life, polity, sociology, geography, topography, art, architecture and painting, government, administration, cattle wealth, economic life and a thousand other similar topics mapping out the entire canvas of the nation's life have gone into the making of Purāṇa literature."[5] But in spite of their encyclopaedic character, they pertain to different religious sects associated with their particular and respective deities. In general they relate to Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava religious movements which were marked by the assimilation to their doctrine of a variety of other religious ideas. "The Purāṇas may thus be regarded as a deliberate attempt to bring the theistic religions like Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism within the pale of orthodoxy by combining the new doctrines with a respect for Vedic rituals, customs and beliefs, specially the orthodox ideas of caste and order [*Varṇaśrama*]."[6] "They thus represent a synthesis of Vedic lore, historical tradition and religious beliefs which gain momentum to become popular movements. They [Purāṇas] afford us far greater insight into all aspects and phases of Hinduism—its mythology, its idol worship, its theism and pantheism, its love of gods, its philosophy and its superstitions, its festivals and ceremonies, and its ethics than any other work."[7]

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, the subject of the present study, shares these features with the other Purāṇas, but it has an originality and a special significance inasmuch as it has become particularly associated with the vicissitudes of Indian history over many centuries. Such an approach is endorsed by the intimate relationship of this Purāṇa to astronomical and astrological sciences, centering on the Sun. The solar cult was popularised in ancient times, particularly during the early centuries of the Christian era, by a special branch of Iranian priests called Magas. These Brāhmaṇas came and settled in India in large numbers and cultivated the solar cult and their astronomy, both being central to their beliefs. Their importance can be judged by the fact that Varāhamihira belonged to them, many of whose beliefs and doctrines are found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. The amount of information assimilated to the core of the *Purāṇa* from his work is too considerable to be dismissed as casual. The amount of information of Māga origin is so great that one might well conclude that it is at their hands that the Purāṇa received its final shape, whosoever the original compilators. As a result, the Purāṇa derives some of its broadness and catholicity of outlook from the solar cult of the Maga Brāhmaṇas, as shown in its liberal and novel attitude towards institutions, such as caste.

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* has an obvious connection with oracle and prophecy, and the prognostication based on readings of the conjunction of the stars, the sun being the chiefest among them. "That *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* was probably so called because it contained in prophetic vein the names and other details of kings that flourished after the Bhārata heroes and after a few generations of descendants of them and their contemporaries and probably purported to have been composed by some sage or by Vyāsa."[8] It appears that the authors so named the Purāṇa owing to the fact that the sun, being the centre of the whole planetary system, was its symbol by which, besides, the believer's future could be foretold.

Its association with the sun was the basis of its extended use for prophecy derived from an intuited correlation between the sun and the solar planets at the moment of birth and the time-point of future reference which was being investigated. This justified the nomenclature, *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.

There is evidence to prove that the Maga Brāhmaṇas, the Sun-worshippers from Iran who believed in astrology, selected this text for the propagation of their cult. Agatheos states that, "everybody honoured them and behaved towards them with utmost respect. The public questions were decided with their suggestions and prophecies."[9] The Purāṇa itself made prophecies on its own account so to speak. The Maga Brāhmaṇas possibly found it necessary to draw from a testamentary authority and therefore to constitute their assumptions into an authentic source.

Subject-Matter

This Purāṇa deals with a variety of topics. Among them the worship of the sun, historical data and fasts and gifts occupy many pages of the text. The present study seeks to assess the nature, form and extent of Sun-worship. It also reveals the element of foreign influence in this cult. The historical portion presents an unsystematic and unreliable assortment of facts. For example, at one place, it is stated that a number of kings ruled for thousands of years in a chronological sequence, but no mention is made of the dynasties and their different branches. The known order of some dynasties has been reversed. The mythical origin of the reformers of the Bhakti cult has been recorded as an accepted historical statement of time-bound fact. The names of Mughal kings and Maratha chiefs also find sporadic mention. The story of Ālhā and Ūdal (Besavāri version) is discussed in great detail. The coming of the British in India and the establishment of factories by them in this country also find a place in its pages.

"Uttara Parvan" and some of the chapters of the "Brāhma Parvan" are devoted to fasts and gifts and it would be fair to say that a third of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* has been taken up by these topics. Here we feel that fasts and gifts have been over-emphasised.

The chapters on women throw some light on their satisfactory, if not very high, status in society. Though education and independence are denied to them and certain restrictions are imposed on them, yet they are given a supreme position in domestic management. Though independence to determine their personal lives and in relation to authority in the family was denied to them implicitly by usage or explicitly by received law, they enjoyed complete freedom in the management of the domestic economy. The right to divorce is granted and the woman is regarded as a half part of man.

The chapters on the caste system set forth a liberal view and various stanzas prove that the basis of caste is neither birth, nor family, nor profession; rather it is the disposition and the actions of an individual. The examples of various sages or *ṛṣis* of low caste attaining the highest knowledge serve to substantiate the above claim even if it is unlikely that they are cited with any polemical intent or to refute. Many stanzas have been written on the duties and privileges of the Brahmins, and special argument is used to establish their supremacy and the authority of the Vedas. The criteria of the castes, and their place in the social structure, have also been discussed in detail. The topics of formal education receive indirect mention in the context of other statements, such as the duties of the students, teachers and their mutual contacts, both pedagogic and personal. Temple architecture gets a short scanty chapter and iconography; another. A chapter dealing with wages of labourers affords a faint picture of the economic conditions of the labouring classes. Various flowers customarily offered to the different gods are stated to bring specific rewards. A chapter on ethics is propped up by another on hell where it is described at some length. Snakes, and the different kinds of bites, receive a place in this medley of subject-matter. Passages from the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* have been incorporated. But no sources are mentioned. Brahmā and Gaṇeśa, methods of worshipping them and the respective spheres of their influence have also been set down from study, experience and investigation. The names of rivers, cities and regions as they obtained in the periods under study were also found in this Purāṇa. The literary practice of acknowledging a source was not in vogue either because personal authority was lacking in an essentially set, oral tradition, or the right to abstract from usage prevailed over it.

Bhaviṣyat, *Bhaviṣya and Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇas*

It is difficult to decide whether *Bhaviṣyat* is earlier than *Bhaviṣaya* or *vice versa*. It is also difficult to decide whether these two names refer to one book or to two books. "The present *Bhaviṣya* appears to be the modern presentation of the ancient *Bhaviṣyat*."[10] "Thus the two names *Bhaviṣya* and *Bhaviṣyat* are given to the present Purāṇa."[11] The statement of Pargiter, cited above, gives the impression that *Bhaviṣyat* is older than *Bhaviṣya*. But at another place the impression, which one might get, is different. "The best interpretation, therefore, is that *Bhaviṣya* means the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, and that *Bhaviṣyat* is a perversion of it."[12] But P.V. Kane disagrees with him. He says, " I fail to understand, however, why he [Pargiter] regards *Bhaviṣyat* as a perversion of *Bhaviṣya*. Bhaviṣyat is as good a word as Bhaviṣya, being employed in several passages, such as *Varāha* (177.34) and *Matsya* (53.62). Pargiter probably wants to identify the *Bhaviṣyat* of *Āpastaṁba* with the *Bhaviṣya* of later times. There is no evidence except the name to identify the two."[13] The citation of *Āpastaṁba* (chapter 3) of the word Bhaviṣyat, goes to prove that this name was coined first. The *Matsya*, *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* borrowed accounts of the Kali Age from the *Bhaviṣya* in the middle of the third century A.D. It appears that the word "*Bhaviṣyat*" was the first to gain currency and due to circumstances not well known to us, the name was subsequently changed into "Bhaviṣya". The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentioned in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* (99.267 *tān sarvān kīrtayiṣyāmi Bhaviṣya pṛthitān nṛpān tebhyaḥ pare ca cānya utpatsyante mahī-kṣitāḥ*) is not the present one but the ancient *Bhavaiṣyat* mentioned in the *Āpastaṁba Dharmasūtra*.

Bhaviṣyottara

Various manuscripts of this Purāṇa have been available, but have not yet been printed separately.[14] The "Uttara Parvan" of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, as it exists at present in the edition of Srī Veṅkateśvara Press, Bombay, dealing with fasts and gifts is really the *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa*. Various writers subscribe to this view. Aparārka (pp. 375-76) extracts a long passage from the

Bhaviṣyottara about constructing, in the month of *Caitra*, a *maṇḍapa* for the distribution of water to travellers in the middle of a city or in a desert or near a temple. A Brahmin was to be engaged to distribute water for the consideration of daily wages and this was to be continued for four months or at least for three fortnights (*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 'Uttara Parvan,' Chapter 22). The *Kālanirṇaya* (p.279) expressly states that *ananta vrata* is described in the *Bhaviṣyottara*, and certain verses are also discussed. Professor Wilson in his introduction to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* points to another work entitled *Bhaviṣyottara* and containing about seven thousand verses as if that was a continuation or supplement of the former. The *Bhaviṣyottara* is a sort of manual of religious practices, the greater portion being devoted to fasts, and the remainder, to the forms to be observed and circumstances under which gifts are to be presented. Mention is also made of the rewards which a devotee gets after observing a variety of fasts and giving many kinds of gifts to Brahmins and other needy persons. "That this 'Uttara Parvan,' is the same as the *Bhaviṣyottara* known to and drawn upon by the *Smṛti* writers of different times and ages, is shown definitely by the fact that this 'Uttara Parvan' calls itself *Bhaviṣyottara* in more places than one, (*Bhav*. IV.2.7 ; 207.4 ; 207.10) ; that it agrees very closely with the extant manuscript of *Bhaviṣyottara* that the large majority of the verses ascribed by the *Smṛti* writers to the *Bhaviṣyottara* occur in the present 'Uttar Parvan', and that, in none of the manuscripts of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, is there even a single mention of any 'Uttara Parvan' as forming part of the *Bhaviṣya Purāna*, which in its 'Brāhma Parvan' is said to have consisted of five *parvans*, viz., Brāhma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Tvaṣṭra and Pratisarga."[15] "The above contents of the *Bhaviṣyottara* show clearly that it is practically a work on fasts (*vratas*), festivals and donations and has almost nothing of the five characteristics of the Purāṇa."[16]

It is a fact that the name *Bhaviṣyottara* does not occur either in the list of 18 Purāṇas or in the Upapurāṇas. From this it would be incorrect to infer that it was not recognised as an authoritative work. It is also known that Vallālasena and Lakṣmidhara do not draw on its contents in their works, but writers like Jīmūtavāhana, Madanapāla, Aparārka, Devanabhaṭṭa, Hemādri, Mādhavācārya, Anantabhaṭṭa, draw profusely upon this work without the least shade of doubt as regards its authenticity and authority. Narasiṁha Vajapey regards it as an Upapurāṇa and a part of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.[17] "Most of the Nībandha writers draw as profusely upon the *Bhaviṣyottara* by naming it independently as upon the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and that none of the verses ascribed to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* or the *Bhaviṣya* by the comparatively early commentators and Nibandha writers except Hemādri and the author of the *Saṁvatsara-pradīpa*, is found in the 'Uttara Parvan', although it is full of various *Smṛti* materials."[18]

Sūrya Purāṇa

R. C. Hazra has collected the following information about the *Sūrya Purāṇa*.

> In his title *Nirṇaya* (fol. 2a) Caṇḍeśvara quotes verse *Nirṇaya Saṁkrāṇtyān ravi-vare ca tathā cendu-parikṣaya, etc.*) which he ascribes to *Sūrya Purāṇa*, Weber describes a MS. of the Kṛṣṇa-pañcamī-Śrāddha-vidhi which claims to belong to the *Sūrya Purāṇa* and in the Berlin MS. of the *Bhaviṣyottara*, there is a chapter on *Pūtra-kāma-Kṛṣṇa-pañcami-vrata* which, in its colophon, names the *Sūrya Purāṇa* as its source. As neither the said verse quoted by Caṇḍeśvara nor the chapters on *Kṛṣṇa-pañcami-śrāddha-vidhi* and *Pūtra-kāma-Kṛṣṇa-pañcamī-vrata* occurs in the present *Sāmba Purāṇa* and no other writer is found to refer to or draw upon the *Sāmba Purāṇa* under the title *Sūrya Purāṇa*, there is little scope for doubt that the *Sūrya Purāṇa* was a distinct work. Its title as well as mention in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* as the source of the said chapter on *Pūtra-kāma-Kṛsṇa-pañcamī-vrata* shows that the *Sūrya Purāṇa* belong to Śauras and was an early work. But none of its MSS. has come down to us.
>
> According to D. R. Bhandarkar, a *Sūrya Purāṇa* quite distinct from the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is known to the Brāhmaṇas called the Sevakas, living round about Jodhpur. As no MS. of this work is known to have been discovered as yet, we are in complete darkness about its nature and contents. The fact that the Sekavas, who call themselves Śākadvīpa Brāhmaṇas, knew that their story is told in the Nāmagrantha of the *Sūrya Purāṇa* and also in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* shows clearly that this *Sūrya Purāṇa* was a Śaura work.[18*]

The extant *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (Bombay edition) has combined the materials of all these Purāṇas. That this text has undergone various changes is quite obvious from the subject-matter. In order to make it up-to-date contemporary events were incorporated in it, thus giving the impression that what was to happen in the future had already been written into this Purāṇa. The writers, who worshipped the Sun, the giver of future knowledge, thus contributed something to the science of astronomy. These writers tried their best to remain faithful to the name of this Purāṇa. They did not mind it that they were doing injustice to the cause of true historical knowledge. In those days, when history was a part of literature, that this procedure would falsify history was not even realised by authors. The canons of true historical knowledge would be of more recent origin.

Manuscripts

Variours MSS. of this Purāṇa have been found by various researchers. Some of them are noted below :

1. MSS. of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* described by Eggeling (*India Office Catalogue* ; Part VI, No. 3447) and Aufrecht (*Bodleian Catalogue*, No. 75) extend up to the Saptamī Kalpa. Their subject-matter is available in the printed *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. These MSS. deal, among other things, with the stories of Bhojakas and their descent from the Magas of the Śākadvīpa and are *āditya-carita-prīya*. It can be asserted without actual comparison that these MSS. have much in common with the "Brahmā Parvan" of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.

2. Rajendra Lal Mitra in *Notices of Sanskrit MSS.*, Vol. V, 1880, says that the co-dex of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* includes the third book or the *Madhyama Tantra*.

> The following is Professor Wilson's account of this book :
>
> This Purāṇa, in which Brahmā having described the greatness and the character of all created things, in the course of the Aghora Kalpa, that is called the *Bhaviṣya*, the story being, for the most part, the events of the future period. It contains 14,000 *ślokas*. This Purāṇa, as the name implies, should be a book of prophecies, foretelling what will be (*bhaviṣyat*) as the *Matsya Purāṇa* states. Whether such a work exists is doubtful. The copies, which appear to be complete, of which there are three in the library of the East India Company, agreeing in their content, with two in my possession, contain about 7,000 *ślokas*. There is another work entitled the *Bhaviṣyottara* as if it were a continuation or supplement of the former, containing also about 7,000 verses, but the subject-matters of both these works are to a very imperfect degree analogous to those to which the *Matsya* alludes.

> The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, as I have it, is a work in 126 short chapters, repeated by Sumantu to Śatānīka, a king of the Pāṇḍava family. It originated with Svayambhūḥ or Brahmā and is described as consisting of five parts—four dedicated, it seems, to as many deities, as they are termed Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Tvaṣṭṛ ; while the fifth is a *pratisarga* or repeated creation. Possibly the first part only has come into my hands, although it does not so appear by the MSS.

The co-dex under notices includes the *Madhyama Tantra* or the third, literally the middle book. It contains 3,500 verses. It is divided into three parts ; the first of which contains 25 chapters, the second 17, and the third 11. The first, after the usual preliminaries, describes some of the higher regions. The duties, characteristics, qualifications of teachers, and the teaching of the Vedas take up seven chapters. Consecration of tanks and religious gifts are also dwelt upon at length. The second part refers to religious duties, the time of performing them, and marks the days for fasts and feasts. The third, devoted to alms-houses, tanks, wells, trees, etc., is cast in the usual epic style of the Purāṇas. Nowhere is anything said of future events.

3. About the genesis of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Aufrecht writes in his short notices in ZDMG 1903 pp. 276-78 as under :

> In der Bombayer Ausgabe des Bhaviṣyapurāṇa von 1897 heisst es am schluss : 'iti Bhaviṣyamahāpurāṇam khānadeśīyaraveragrāma nivāsi—Paraśuramātanayena Govindaśastrinā samyag anekapustak-aśāh-ayyena samśodhya pariskṛtam.' In der Vorrede werden von dem Drucker Khemarāja Śrīkṛṣṇadāsa sechs vollständige und zwei fragmantarische Handschriften erwähut, die zur konstituierung des textes verwendet wurden. Nach dem obigenist Govinda Śāstrin fur alle Augaben verantwortlich.
>
> Das Bhaviṣyapurāṇa wird zuerst in Āpastamba dharmasūtra 2, 24, 6 er-wahnt : puṇah svarge bījārthā bhavantīti Bhaviṣyapurāṇa,
>
> Von dem Bhaviṣyapurāṇa gibt zwei Rezensionen : 1) die gewöhuliche, welche in den eurōpaischen und indischen Bibliotheken hänfig vertreten 1st, 2) eine Rezension, welche wir als Nepalisch bezeichnen Können. Sie 1st durch den Druck Von Bombay und Haraprasāda Śāstrin's Notices second series 2,151 : Brahmāparvan und Madhyamatantra, sowie Lalmitra's Notices

Number 1742 (Madhyamatantra bis etwa zum Ende des tritīyābhāga) vertretem.

* * * * *

Zur Ausfullung dient eine in versem abgefasste version der Vetālapañcaviṁśatikā kaliyugīyetihās-as-amuccaya...kāṇḍa 2 p. 9 b bis 24 b). Sie beginnt milt der katha von pratāpamukuta (Uhla 1) und schliesst Es Scheint, dass de Kompilator Śivadāsa's Rezension benutzt hat. Als Probe werden zwer Geschichten ausgehoben.

* * * * *

4. Haraprasāda Śāstri in his *Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS.*, ed. 1928, p. 428, mentions that a MS. belongs to Hatwā Mahārāja's Library, and from its comparative fullness, from the very clear and detailed accounts given in the notices referred to, as well as from its place of deposit, the library of an orthodox Hindu Rājā, it may well be taken to be authentic. The MS. also indicates that it has a third book, which, however, has not been found with it. The first book in Hatwā Manuscript is complete. It deals with the Navamī Kalpa. The MS. as noticed by R.L. Mitra in No. 2553A is a defective MS. of the first book coming up to Aṣṭamī Kalpa.

The second book in the Hatwā MS. consists of four parts. Part I has 25 chapters, Part II, 26, Part III, 25, and Part IV has 11 chapters.

This MS. has the first part complete with 25 chapters. The second part, according to R.L. Mitra, has 17 chapters, but there are some unknown chapters bringing up the total number to 28, but the last two are very short. The third part in Hatwā MS. has 25 chapters. In the MS. the portion corresponding to the last is missing. What is called the third part seems to be the fourth in the Hatwā MS. in 11 chapters.

5. In the above-mentioned MS. at pages 430, 432 and 437 Janmarahasya, Kalivyavahāra and Aṁṛtanagaramāhatmīa respectively assigned to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, are given. But none of them is available in the extant text. The *Akṣaya-tṛtīyā-vrata* given in page 439 is found in the extant Purāṇa.

6. H. D. Velanker in his *Descriptive Catalogue of the Sanskrit MSS.* ed. 1953, p. 99 speaks about *Harikālī* and *Haritālika* fasts which are mentioned in the present Purāṇa.

7. P. C. Pandey in his *A Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS.* mentions two fasts : *Akṣaya-tṛtīyā* and *Lalita-Kukkutī* on pages 72 and 74 respectively. These two *vratas* are a part of the published Purāṇa.

8. A MS. of this Purāṇa has been found in the *Catalogue of the Sanskrit MS*. in the Calcutta College Library at page 94. It states that, although this work is referred to by the name of *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, it appears to be only a Sanskrit translation of *Bhaktamāla*, for in it are given the lives even of Jīva Gosvāmin and other followers of Gaurānga. According to this work, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is divided into three *kāṇḍas* or parts, viz. (i) Vaiṣṇava Kāṇḍa; (ii) Śaiva Kāṇḍa ; (iii) Śakti Kāṇḍa, and Bhakti is spoken of as the best means of salvation. It contains 6,700 stanzas and is divided into 146 chapters.

9. *Catalogue of the Sanskrit MSS*, Julius Eggeling, ed. 1888, p. 1254, mentions a MS. of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* which was written in Devanāgarī, at Benaras in 1800. It begins thus :

> See Aufrecht, Cat. Bodl ; No. 75, Rajendra Lal Mitra, *Notices* VIII, page 8 (where 133 *adhyāyas* are enumerated, ending with Bhojakanāma Mahattvavarṇanaṁ). In the present MS. the chapters are not numbered, not even sufficiently indicated.

The manuscript seems to be incomplete, the end being different from others described in the notices :

विशेषेण च सौराणं भोजक ! पूज्य उच्यते । भर्त्ता पूज्यो यथा स्त्रीणां ।
शिष्याणां च यथा गुरुः । भोजकस्तु तथा पूज्यः सौराणां हृदिकात्मजा :
यस्य भुंक्ते भोजकस्तु गंध पुष्पादिनार्चितः ।
तस्य भुंक्ते स्वयं भानु पितरो देवतास्तथा ॥
एवं पूज्यास्तथा भोज्या भोजका हृदिकात्मज ।
ये सौरा भोजकस्यानां भुञ्न्ते निर्विकल्पतः ॥

10. *Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS*., 1928 by Haraprasāda Śāstri, p. 424, mentions a MS. of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* having 6,800 *ślokas*, character Bengali, dated Śaka 1773. It does not agree with any of the known recensions of the Purāṇas. It is divided into five Parvans : Brāhma, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Tvaṣṭṛ and Pratisarga.
It begins thus :

ओं नमो गणेशाय
तेजो मण्डलमाविश्य प्रकाशात्मा प्रकाशवत्
एकदा सूतमासीनं भुनयो दीर्घ सत्रिणः
पप्रच्छुर्विविधान् धर्मान् शौनकाद्या महर्षयः

11. *Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS*., 1928, ed. by Haraprasāda Śāstri at p. 428 states a MS. of this Purāṇa having 24,000 *ślokas* with Nāgarī characters.

This Purāṇa is well known and has been re-printed often. But several manuscripts of this work have been seen to differ materially from the printed edition, and the so called discrepancies have caused a good deal of confusion among scholars. In fact, they are, as will be seen, only different parts of the work, unspecified in those MSS.

12. In *Notices on Sanskrit MSS., Vol. II*, 1904. Haraprasāda Śāstri mentions a MS. of our Purāṇa, extant, 21925 *ślokas*, character, Nāgarī. Date, Smt. 1936. Place of deposit, Mahārāja's Library, Hatwā.

It begins as follows :

नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
नमो ब्रह्मण्यदेवाय गो ब्राह्मण हिताय च,
जगद्धिताय कृष्णाय गोविन्दाय नमोनमः ।

Uttara Bhāga :

ओं नमः श्री गणेशाय ओं नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय,
स्वछं चन्द्रावद्राय करिकरमकर क्षोय सञ्जातकां ।

End :

देवाथे ब्राह्मणार्थे यस्तु प्रार्थयते नरः,
जलमन्नं महाबाहो स याति परमं पदम् ॥

Some of the MSS. of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* cited by R.C. Hazra in his book *Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs* are not mentioned here, since it would entail an unnecessary repetition.

Parvans

The accounts of various Purāṇas and the different MSS. of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* differ considerably with regard to the number of Parvans. The *Nāradīya Purāṇa* states that the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* was divided by Vyāsa into five Parvans, viz. Brāhma, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Saura and Pratisarga. Haraprasāda, as stated above, describes a MS. of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* consisting of five Parvans and dealing with the Kalpas (rites and ceremonies) observed on different dates with stories of Rudra and the Sun and so forth. The description shows that (i) the Brahmā Parvan ends with *Pratisagra Kalpa*, the interlocutors being Śatānīka and Sumantu ; (ii) the Vaiṣṇava Parvan deals with all the remaining *kithis* and *kalpas*. It has same main interlocutor as in the Brāhma Parvan. It contains 31 chapters ; (iii) the Rudra Parvan mentions the origin of Rudra and has three chapters ; (iv) the Tvaṣṭṛ or Śaura Parvan contains the conversation between Sūrya and Śūka. It discusses the story of the marriage of the sun with Saṁjñā. It also refers to Śūka going to the solar regions : (v) the fifth parvan, the Pratisarga, begins with the Sun as the interlocutor, contains the conversation of Sūrya and Śūka and ends with the return of the latter from the solar regions. Another MS. described by Haraprasāda Śāstri (*Notices on Sanskrit MSS*. second series, Vol. II, No. 151) divides the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* into two parts—Puru and Upari. Yet another MS. described by Śāstri speaks of three parts : Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Śākta. *The Catalogue of the Sanskrit MSS.* in the Calcutta College Library Vol.4, also mentions five parvans of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. The printed *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is divided into four Parvans, viz., Brāhma, Madhyama, Partisarga and Uttara. The Brāhma Parvan starts with the conversation of Sumantu and Śatānīka. We find that there is thus a considerable difference among the numbers and the names of the various Parvans of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. There is also much difference between the printed text of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and that contemporaneously known to *Matsya* and *Vāyu*. The *Matsya* says that it deals with the glories of the Sun and contains 14,530 *ślokas*. The *Agni* says that the number of *ślokas* contanined in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is 14,000. We have also seen from the *Matsya* and the *Nāradīya* that the Brāhma Parvan of the earlier Purāṇa began as a dialogue between Suta and Śaunaka and that the Purāṇa was first declared by Brahmā to Manu. In the published *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, on the other hand, there is no mention either of Suta and Śaunaka, or of Brahmā and Manu. It begins with the stories of Śatānīka, who, being advised by the sages, asks Vyāsa to speak on the Dharmaśāstra. Vyāsa refers him to his pupil Sumantu, who is to speak on this subject.

The above discussion clearly shows that the published *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* was recast, eliminating certain material and adding other. Rather, it was recast several times to facilitate the incorporation of fresh matter at each stage. Along with the material, the number and names of Parvans also underwent changes and thus we get only four Parvans in the printed *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.

Date

The earliest references to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* are found in *Āpastaṁba Sūtra* the date of which was estimated by Bühler as not later than the third century B.C. and possibly 150-200 years earlier than that (S.B.E. II,p.X/iii). To quote Hopkins, "the *Āpastaṁba Dharmasūtra* seems to have been a work which arose among the Āndhras of the south-eastern coast, and probably is not older than the second century B.C. It recognises, alone among the Sūtras, a Purāṇa (*Bhaviṣya*, II.24,6) and its archaic effect linguistically, which in large measure determined Bühler in his conjecture that this Sūtra might revert to the fifth century, may well be due to the fact that the Āndhras retained linguistic peculiarities long after Pāṇini fixed the northern usage."[19] Pargiter is of opinion that the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* attained this position in not less than half a century.[20] Hence, he finds he cannot ascribe the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* a date later than the early part of the third century B. C. and even possibly earlier than that conjectural date by about 150 years at the most. Bühler holds that the date of this *Purāṇa* might be about the fifth century B.C.

On the basis of the above data in the *Āpastaṁba Dharmasūtra* Kane opines. "As *Āpastaṁba Dharmasūtra* quotes four verses from a Purāṇa and expressly names *Bhaviṣyat Purāṇa*, it follows that, by the fifth or fourth century B.C. at the latest there was in existence a *Bhaviṣyat Purāṇa*."[21]

It was a device of the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* to collect past events and pass them off as predictions. The exalted position and the authority of this text can be easily seen even in the third century A.D. when the *Matsya*, the *Vāyu* and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* borrowed the accounts of the dynasties of Kali Age from it. "The *Bhaviṣya* professed to treat of future events subsequent to that battle, which practically ushered in the Kali Age, and should, therefore, supply an account of the dynasties of that age, because royal *vaṁśas* were one of the prescribed topics of the Purāṇas ; and, as the Purāṇas professed to have been composed by Vyāsa, it took the same stand. Hence it appropriated the Prākṛta metrical accounts, converted Prākṛta *ślohas* into Sanskṛt-*ślokas*, and altered them to the form of a prophecy as uttered by Vyāsa ; and this re-shaping was carried through. Some compilations seem to have been made, of the Āndhras at any rate, in the reign of the Āndhra king, Yajñaśrī, about the end of the second century A. D. ; but the first definite compilation is that which brought the history down from the time of the epochal battle to a little later than the end of the Āndhras, together with the final portion and was incorporated in the *Bhaviṣya* about or soon after the middle of the third century, and there are reasons for fixing its date as not later than 260 A. D. The account was apparently written in Kharoṣṭhī and composed in northern India. The *Matsya* borrowed it from the *Bhaviṣya*, probably during the last quarter of the third century, and so has preserved what the *Bhaviṣya* contained then."

"The *Bhaviṣya* account was revised about the years 315-20 and brought up to date through the insertion of the later dynastic matter and much addition to the 'Evils of the Kali Age,' it was still in Kharoṣṭhī, and was certainly written down then. The version was borrowed by the *Vāyu* then, but exists now only in one MS. of the *Vāyu*. The language of the account in the *Bhaviṣya* was revised again about the year 325-330, and that version was adopted by the *Vāyu*, and soon afterwards by the *Brahmāṇḍa*, and now constitutes their general versions. They have thus preserved what the *Bhaviṣya* contained at that time."[22] It is in the recension of that vintage that *Bhaviṣya* excerpts are found in the two latter Purāṇas in the form in which they are current today. That a further revision of the *Bhaviṣya* source in these Purāṇas took place in the first quarter of the fourth century can be similarly inferred from the use of Kharoṣṭhī in the incorporated material. D. C. Sircar also holds the same view.[23]

The following dates for many individual chapters on women, caste, sun-worship, etc. in the Brāhma Parvan are assigned by R. C. Hazra in his *Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs*.

Smṛti chapters of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*	—on the duties of castes and *āśramas*, duties of women, customs, marriage, worship, vows, initiation, etc.	not earlier than 500 A.D.

Of these.

Bhav. 1, Chapters 21, 31, 32, 36, 37, 39, 46, 81, 96-101, & 106	not later than 1000 A.D.
Bhav. 1, Chapters 3, 4, 62, 65, 93, 103, 118, 181, 184, & 186	not later than 1075 A.D.

Bhav. 1, Chapters 2, 18, 19, 22. 38, 47, ⎫ not later
51, 55-59, 68-70, 82, 83, 86, 89-91, ⎪ than 1200
104, 105, 108-112, 165-170-172, ⎪ A. D.
183, 197, 208, 209, 212-214 and so on. ⎭

The major portion of the "Brāhma Parvan" of the *Bhaviṣya Purāna* can claim an earlier date than that assigned to it by Hazra on certain other grounds as well. We come across in this Purāṇa the names of the *nakṣatras* in the order from Kṛittikā to Bharaṇī (1.179, 1-10) in one place and from Aśvinī to Bharanī in another (1.1.2,47-71) which point to an earlier origin. "It is, however, possible to form an idea of the upper limit of the date of specially the *smṛti* chapters. An examination of these chapters as well as of the untraceable verses quoted in the Nibandhas shows that they were composed at a time when the names of the zodiacal signs and the week-days were well known and widely used. The *nakṣatras* have been mentioned in the order from Kṛttikā to Bharaṇī in one place [viz. *Bhav*. 1.179,1-10] and from Aśvinī to Revatī in another [viz. *Bhav*. 1.102, 47-71]. The chapters in which the *nakṣatras* have been named are closely connected with the preceding and the following ones, in some of which the verses quoted by the Nibandha writers have been traced. These chapters, therefore, cannot be taken as dating later than the adjacent ones. Now, the order of the *nakṣatras* and the popularity of the names of the *rāśis* and the week-days show that the upper limit of the date of composition of the *smṛti* chapters should be placed about 500 A.D. because from 550 A.D., the order of *nakṣatras* from Aśvinī to Revatī attained a state of general acceptance."[24] "Thus, some of the verses quoted from the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* in the Mitākṣarā (on Yāj.) Kālaviveka, Aparārka com. on Yāj., Dānasāgara, Smṛticandṛkā, Caturvarga, Cintāmaṇi, Mādhavācārya com. on the *Parāśara Smṛti*, *Madana Pārijāta* and Kullūkabhaṭṭa commentary on the *Manu Smṛti* are found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* 1, chapters 2, 3, 4, 18,19 ,21,22,31, 32, 36-9, 46,47, 51, 55-9, 64, 65, 68-70, 81-3, 86, 89, 90, 91, 93, 96-101, 103, 104, 106, 108-12, 118, 165-70, 172, 181, 183, 184, 186, 197,208, 209, 212, 214, and so forth. Therefore, it is sure that the major portion of the present 'Brāhma Parvan' can rightly claim an early date."[25] It will not be out of place to relate a few lines of the *Śāmba Purāṇa* in order to preface a discussion of the problem of rival and different dates for the chapters of this part of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. The *Sāmba Purāṇa* had to be written ". . . . in order to modify the earlier cult of the Sun by incorporating Magian elements (which must have been too popular to be neglected), to establish the position of Magas as full-fledged Brāhmins authorised to worship the Sun and to conform the Magian ideas and practices to the Vedic notion."[26] R.C. Hazra has shown that a large number of chapters and verses are common between them.[27] Moreover, he has also shown that the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is the borrower.[28] The date of origin of the first part of the *Śāmba Purāṇa*, many verses and chapters from which are found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, has been estimated as extending from 500 to 950 A.D. The corresponding dates of the same verses and chapters of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* range from 1000 to 1250 A.D. It is quite possible that, after the composition of the *Śāmba Purāṇa*, the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* might have taken their time in incorporating the material of the *Sāmba Purāṇa* in their own.

The "Madhyama Parvan" which is not mentioned in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* contains tantric elements and recognises the authority of the *tantras*.[29] It is true that some of the early commentators and Nibandha writers like Bhavadeva, Jīmūtavāhana, Vijñaneśvara, Aparārka, Hemādri, Madanapāla, etc. quote many verses from the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, but not a single verse of this part of the Purāṇa occurs in their works. We find that here Yamalas and Damaras are mentioned. It can be safely concluded that the "Madhyama Parvan" cannot claim an early date on account of any constituent passages but a viable later date can be easily assigned to it.[30] Thus we can say that the "Madhyama Parvan" of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* was composed during 900 A.D. to 1400 A.D. Out of these, chapters 6, 7, 8 of Part II which is devoted to the science of astronomy might possibly have been written round about 600 A.D. because this science was widely popularised by Varāhamīhīra during 500 and 550 A.D.

The third Parvan *viz.*, the Pratisarga of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* contains historical material. It begins from the accession of Manu to the throne and ends with the mention of the arrival of the British in India and the rule of "Queen Victavati" (Victoria). The historical material discussed in this part of the Purāṇa is vague and haphazard. The first three chapters dealing with the names of the kings of the solar and lunar dynasties can easily lay claim to an early date. The chapters dealing with the stories of Adam, Noah, Yakut, and others were incorporated at a later date. In one chapter we come across a few names of kings of the Nanda and Maurya dynasties. The stories of Padmāvati, Haridāsa, Satyanarāin were incorporated in the Purāṇa after the chapters on the Nandas and Mauryas were written. The story of the Lay of Ālhā (111.3.1-32) could probably have been written during the 13th century. Names of some Rājput kings (III.4.1-4) have similarly been added in a most casual way. The chapters (III.4-5-26) dealing with the fabricated myths of the births of Śaṁkarācārya, Mādhava, Jayadeva, Kabīr, Nānak, Narsī and the references to Timur, Babur, Humayun, Shershah, Akbar, Ṣalem, Aurangzeb, Shivaji, Mahadevaji Sindhia clearly prove that these chapters were incorporated in the *Purāṇa* from time to time. The reference to English words like "Sunday", "February" and "sixty" in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, and to the coming of the British, their factories in Calcutta and to Queen Victoria also show beyond doubt that these chapters or verses belong to the 19th century.[32]

We have already seen that many Nibandha writers have profusely quoted from the *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa*, the 'Uttara Parvan' of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* or the *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa* must be dated earlier than 900 A.D. It is also known that this part is free from tantṛc influence. It is possible to argue from this fact alone that this Purāṇa cannot be pushed forward in time beyond 800 A.D., because we know from other Purāṇic works that tāntric influences began to be absorbed to any significant extent by the Purāṇas from about 800 A.D. Moreover the "Uttara Parvan" mentions the *Rāmāyana*, *Mahābhārata*, *Harivaṁśa* and gives the list of Viṣṇu's ten incarnations. It includes the name of Buddha also. We know that Buddha began to be regarded an incarnation of Viṣṇu from about 550 A.D. In this Parvan not a single *vrata* is stated of which Brahmā is considered the presiding chief deity. He has been relegated to a secondary position in some *vratas*. At the time of the compilation of this Brahmā Parvan, it could be argued, he had yielded up his pride of place. In the words of R.C. Hazra :[33] "Thus the date of this section of the Purāṇa falls between 700 and 800 A.D. It is highly probable that it was compiled towards the end of the 8th century A.D. The catholic spirit, which this Purāṇa entertains regarding the different deities, and the secondary position to which it lowers Brahmā, tend to support this date, because it was at this time that Śaṁkarācārya began his activities and the ḍancāyatana-pūjā was gaining ground."[34]

The views of P.V. Kane regarding the date of *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* also deserve our attention.[35]

From the above it can be asserted that, for maintaining the significance and importance of this name *viz.*, *Bhaviṣya*, the authors documented past events at random imparting to them a specious futuristic and prophetic colouring. In this way attempts have been made by the authors of this Purāṇa to write specially historical events in the form of prophecies. This was done to impress upon the readers the genuineness of its name, i.e., *Bhaviṣya*. Every author picked on a few stray facts here and there and incorporated them in the text without bothering about their veracity or ensuring the coherence of the passages so interpolated. It has suffered additions and revisions at the hands of each new generation of aspirants who have written ; contemporary events into earlier originals and revised the whole so that it could speak with the voice of contemporaneity and authentic prophecy. The intentions of its authors over generations of time was apparently to make good the claim of prophecy implicit as they understood it in the title. With the frequent changes occurring in this *Purāṇa*, its subject-matter and the language came to be greatly corrupted.

The fact that the original *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* was much shorter than the present one and that it grew in bulk with the progressive addition of stories, is clearly shown by the present *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. It is stated here that all the Purāṇas originally contained 12,000 *ślokas* each, but later on they increased in bulk.[36] The extant *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* came to have half a lac *ślokas* through the incorporation of fresh material. In the long process of frequent changes, the sanctity of its antiquity and name was of course never lightly regarded. This was, however, achieved at the cost of historical truth, a proper conception of which was woefully lacking among the writers of ancient India. The second quarter of the 19th century can readily be assigned as the date for the final redaction of this Purāṇa. Thus the upper and lower limits can be fixed so as to subsume the period over which it was compiled, namely 450 or 500 B.C. to 1850 A.D.

Conclusion

It is thus clear that the question of the chronology of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is a thorny one. Scholars are not agreed on any single date or even on any firm set of upper and lower limits for it. This is due to the heterogeneous character of the material found in it. Whereas the earliest reference to this Purāṇa occurring in such an early text as the *Āpastaṁba Dharmasūtra*, which is decidedly of pre-Christian origin, the mention of Mughal Kings and even British rulers indicates such a late date as the 19th century. Therefore, instead of being positive on any specific date it is better to regard this text as having evolved over a period of 2,000 years. As has been hinted above and will be dwelt upon subsequently, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* represents an independent *genre* of historical literature in which historical events were expounded through prophecies. The result was that history acquired the tone of prophecy, chronology became astrologically oriented, and past and present were made known through the future. This particular literature went on gaining in volume and content from age to age and eventually assumed the shape of the text that we have before us. Inevitably this process of development must have entailed a constant addition or a regular proving and adding of materials. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to sift the grain from the chaff or to analyse the various layers of accretion which have led to its present bulk. However, as will be clear from a perusal of the present thesis, it appears well nigh certain that this Purāṇa received its characteristic form and underwent a drastic revision in the first half of 1000 A.D.

During this period Indian culture passed through intrusions by and assimilation of many foreign peoples. The Pahlavas, the Scythians, the Sodgians are a few of the numerous Iranian and Central Asian people who streamed into India and brought a new shift in or impetus to her cultural development. Though a majority of those people merged in the multitudinous ocean of Indian civilisation, and adapted themselves to the dominant ways of its people, they did contribute and leave behind their own identifiable myths, legends, customs, styles and ideas. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* became associated with a section of these people who emerged as the Maga Brāhmins. They practised a peculiar cult of Sun-worship with a unique mythological background, had an independent outlook on matters like caste, which worked clear of any rigid conception and devoted themselves to the science of the stars which gained its ascendancy in an Irano-Babylonian setting. Accordingly they made the literature of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* the mouth-piece and repository of their distinctive ideas and thoughts and gave it the peculiar form, temper and outlook which have clearly marked it off from other Purāṇic compilations and placed it on independent historical-*cum*-literary and mythical-*cum*-religious pedestal.

NOTES

1. The *Cultural Heritage of India*. Vol. I, p. 169.
2. K.M. Munshi, Foreword, *The Classical Age*, p. XX.
3. The *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. I, p. 182.
4. F.E. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, (ed. 1962, p. 1.
5. V.S. Agrawala, *Matsya Purāṇa : A Study*, Preface, pp. XI-XII.
6. G.V. Devasthali, "Literature", *The Classical Age*, p. 297.
7. M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol. I, p.529.
8. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmśāstra*, Vol. V, Part II, p.849.
9. Arthur Christensen, *Iran under the Sassanids*, Urdu trans. from the French by Mahammad Iqbal, ed. 1941, p. 150.
10. Pargiter, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
11. A.A. Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, p. 302.
12. F.E. Pargiter, *The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of Kali Age*, ed. 1962, p. VIII.
13. P.V. Kane, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, Part II, p. 851.
14. R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, Vol. II, pp. 366-69.
15. *ibid.*, pp. 368-69.
16. *ibid.*, p. 377.
17. Narasimha Vajapeya, *Nityācārya-pradīpa*, p. 19.

18, 18* R.C. Hazra, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 371.

19. E.W. Hopkins, "Family Life and Social Customs as They Appear in the Sūtras". The *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. 1, ed. 1962, p. 223.
20. *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*. p. 51.
21. P.V.Kane, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, Part II, p. 853.
22. Pargiter, *The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 27.
23. The *Bhaviśya* was the first Purāṇa to give an account of the dynasties of the Kali Age and the *Matsya*, *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa* Purāṇas got their accounts from it, though these, as well as some other Purāṇas, existed before the *Bhaviṣya*. Metrical accounts of the dynasties of North India grew up gradually, composed in *ślokas* in a literary Prākṛt and recited by bards and minstrels. After the introduction of writing about the seventh centuary B.C., the accounts were composed and written down in or near Magadha in Māgadhī or Pālī. The *Bhaviṣya* appropriated the Prākṛta metrical accounts and converted the Prākṛta into Sanskṛt in the form of a prophecy uttered by Vyāsa. The re-shaping was

carried though generally but not yet completely, and revisions of the text with new inclusions were taking place from time to time. D.C. Sircar, *Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*, ed.1964, p. 18.

24. R.C. Hazra, *Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs*, ed. 1940, p. 172.
25. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
26. R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, Vol. I, p. 32.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-9.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-82.
29. 1.2. 2-3.

    पर्वाणि चात्र वै पंच कीर्तितानि .स्वयंभुवा ।
    प्रथमं कथ्यते ब्राह्मं द्वितीयं वैष्णवं स्मृतम् ॥
    तृतीयं शैवभाख्यातं चतुर्थं त्वाष्ट्रमुच्यते ।
    पंचमं प्रतिसर्गाख्यं सर्वलोकैः सुपूजितम् ॥

30. "Though the 'Madhyama Parvan' is generally a later work, it contains chapters, and verses which must be dated earlier than 1500 A.D., because of the verses quoted by Raghunandana in his *Smṛti-tattva* 11, pp. 286-7 from the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇiya Madhyama Tantra-śaṣṭhī Bdhyāyaḥ Purāṇa* and on p. 509 from the ninth chapter of the third part' of the same Purāṇa (cf. *īti-Bhaviṣya Purāṇe tṛtīya-bhāga navamodhyāyaḥ*), those on p. 509 are found to tally with *Bhav.* 11 'Madhyama Parvan', iii (*tṛtīya-bhāga*), chap. 18 verses 1 & 4-10 (the lines *tathā jambu, eteśam valkal rasa and kusa-vāamīka-saṁbhutam* being not found." Hazra, *Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs*, p. 169.
31. 111. 1, 5, 37.

    रविवारे च सण्डे च फाल्गुने चैव फर्वरी ।
    षष्टिश्च सिक्स्टी ज्ञेया तदुदाहार बृट्टिशम् ॥

32. 111. 4, 22. 75.

    नगर्य्यां कलिकातायां स्थापयामा सुरुद्यताः ।
    विकटे पश्चिमे द्वीपे तत्पनी विकटावती ॥

33. *Hazra op. cit.*, Vol. II. p. 394.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 395.
35. *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. V, Part II. "Accounts of the contents of the *Bhaviṣya* in *Matsya* 53. 30-31, *Agni* 272.12

and *Nāradīya* 1.100 do not tally with the *Bhaviṣya* (Venkatesvara ed.) It is divided into four Parvans: Brāhma, Madhyama, Pratisarga and Uttara. It is only the "Brāhma Parvan" that can claim an early date. The "Pratisarga Parvan" is a modern fabrication containing stories of Adam and Eve, Pṛthvīrāja and Saṁyogītā, the Mlecchas of Dehali, Rāmānuja, Kabir, Naraṣṛī (Narsi ?), Nanak, Caitanya, Nityānand, Raidāsa, Mādhavācārya, Bhattoja, etc. The *Bhaviṣyottara* is discarded by Ballālasena as unauthoritative, though it was popular in his day. Aparārka quotes 160 verses from *Bhaviṣyottara* on *dana* of various kinds. The *smṛti* chapter of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (1, p. 203) quotes a single verse from the same. Hence the *Bhaviṣyottara* cannot be later than 1000 A.D. The *Kalpataru* quotes hundreds of verses from *Bhaviṣya* on *vratas* and many verses from other *kāṇḍas*, e.g. 55 on *brahmacāri*, 110 on *niyatakāla*, 101 on *gṛhastha*, 100 on *rājadharma*, 15 on *śrādha*. The *Mit*. quotes a single verse from *Bhaviṣya* about donating a golden image of a snake as a cure for snake-bite. Aparārka quotes about 125 verses from *Bhaviṣya* of which about 90 relate to *prāyaścittas*.

One remarkable feature of the extracts from *Bhaviṣya* in Aparārka is that they contain the views of Angiras, Gautama, Parāśara, Manu, Vasiṣṭha and Saṅkha. There are several passages quoted by Aparārka from the *Bhaviṣya* which approximately indicate the age of the current *Bhaviṣya*. The latter work refers to eight *vyakaraṇas* in 1.1.59-61, viz., Brāhma, Aindra, Yamya, Raudra, Vāyavya Vāruṇa, Sāvitra and Vaiṣṇava. But these are different from the eight well-known grammars (except Aindra). It mentions the foreign words Āra (Mars) and Kona (Saturn) and states that these planets are to be worshipped along with Śiva, Pārvatī, Gaṇeśa, the Sun, &c. In prescribing a *prāyaścitta* for killing a Brahmin, the *Bhaviṣya* prescribes (as one of the alternatives) the *prāyaścitta* prescribed by Parāśara. There fore, the extant *Bhaviṣya* cannot be placed earlier than about the sixth or seventh century A. D. (*vide* H. in I.C. Vol. III. pp. 223-29 and PRHR *Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs*, pp. 167-73, for *Bhaviṣya* and *JOI* (Baroda) Vol. III, pp. 8-27 for *Bhaviṣyottara*.

36. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* 1.1.103-105.

सर्वण्येव पुराणानि संज्ञेयानि नरर्षभ ।
द्वादशैव सहस्राणि प्रोक्तानीह मनीषिभिः ॥
पुनर्वृद्धिं गतानीह आख्यानैर्विविधैनृप ।
यथा स्कांदं तथा चेदं भविष्यं कुरुनंदन ॥
स्कांदं शत सहस्त्रं तु लोकानां ज्ञातमेव हि ।
भविष्य मेतदृषिणा लक्षार्द्धं संख्यया कृतम् ॥

CHAPTER II

THE MAGAS AND SUN-WORSHIP

The Rise of the Sassanids

The Sassanid dynasty played an important role in the history of Persia. For us the study of this dynasty is essential, because there existed close cultural contact between India and Iran during this period. The rulers established their supremacy over the Śakas and Kuṣāṇas in India in the third century A.D. or even before.[1] They became the overlords of the Scythian chiefs of western and northern India and remained as such till the Guptas conquered these regions. Their political influence remained intact in India from that time up to the campaigns of Samudragupta in northern India. This long contact between India and Iran was not fruitless. Even after that, though the political suzerainty was terminated, the influence as a cultural vestige remained. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* accordingly became a record and symbolic expession of that relationship.

Zoroastrianism was Iran's state religion during the Sassanid dynasty. Zoroaster maintains that Ahura Mazdah is the creator of the world. All things originate from Him and also merge in Him. He manifests himself in six forms. He creates two opposite forces in this world : the force of good represented by light and the force of evil represented by darkness. The progress of man and the evolution of nature is due to the struggle of these forces. The battle between these forces is eternal. According to Zoroaster, the actions of human beings will weigh the scales in favour of one side or the other. It is the duty of man to shun evil actions and perform virtuous deeds. For this purpose Zoroaster has laid much emphasis on three things : good thoughts, good words, and good actions. Welfare of all and harm to none is implied in these three things. It is the duty of man to befriend a foe, educate a fool and make an evil minded one a virtuous person.[2]

Early Points of Contact between India and Iran

The Vedic Āryans, who ritually worshipped Nature and its powers through "the agency of offerings", held the Sun in great esteem. He was worshipped under different names. "Sūrya, the visible celestial luminary, was being worshipped in India from very early times. The Vedas refer to him and his various aspects as Sāvitrī, Pūṣan, Mitra, Viṣṇu, etc. . . . Most of these deities along with others came to constitute, in different groupings and contexts, the class of gods called Ādityas. Their number, indefinite in early Vedic texts, was later fixed at 12. The Epic and Purāṇa Literature sticks to this number".[3] A dispeller of darkness and giver of life, warmth, etc. was an object of great devotion not only in India, but also in various other parts of the world. The Indo-European tribes played a prominent part in spreading this cult. There is considerable evidence, both literary and archaeological, to prove the prevalence of sun-worship in Iran, Babylon, Rome, Northumberland and other places under various names...... "Every student is familiar with the evidence that proves the historic relationship between the Hindus and the Persians, through ties of common Āryan blood, close kinship in language and tradition, and through near affinities in the matter of religious beliefs, ritual observances, manners and customs."[4] The *Avesta* and the *Ṛg-veda*, the earliest literary records of the Iranians and Indians respectively, contain sufficient data from which a close relationship could be argued. "The religion [Mithraism] ... enjoyed a wide-spread popularity in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era, centred in the worship of Mithra, a divinity worshipped in the Indo-Iranian period by the two most easterly branches of the Āryan race, as is shown by the fact that his (Sun's) name appears in the form Mitra among the gods of the Vedic pantheon and in that of Mithra in the early religious poetry of Persia,"[5] "One of the most ancient cults, perhaps the most ancient of all, is under the name of Mitra, the Persian Mithras ; whence some have conjectured that India derived her solar religion from the west. If borrowing took place on either side, it is probable that, in those early days, the indebtedness was Persian."[6] "He [Zoroaster] taught a new religion rooted in the old Iranian or Āryan folk-religion, of which we can form some representation by comparison with the religion of the Vedas. The Āryan religion was polytheistic, worship was paid to popular divinities, such as the war-god, dragon-slayer, Indra, the natural forces and elements, such as fiire, but the Āryaṇs also believed in the ruling of moral powers of an eternal law in nature. On solemn occasions the inspiring drink, *Soma*, [*Haoma*] was consumed by the devout. Numerous coincidences with the Indian religion survive in Zoroastrianism, side by side with astonishing diversities."[7] There is a great resemblance between Asura Varuṇa of the *Ṛg-Veda* and Ahura Mazdah of Zoroastrianism. The dethronement of Varuṇa from his much exalted place in the *Ṛg-Veda* also finds echoes in the Zoroastrian religion. "After the great split, however, Varuṇa was dethroned from his place of pride by the Hindus who assigned the ascendency to Indra [*Ṛg-veda*, X. 124, 4]. As Griswold observes, it is the tragedy of the *Ṛg-Veda* that Varuṇa, thus dethroned from his lofty ethical pedestal to the inferior position of a petty godling of water, was divested of his moral significance [*Ṛg-veda*, VII, 34, x. 11]. It was after the great split that Asura came to be deliberately invested with the vicious significance it now bears, for instance, in *Ṛg-veda*, X. 53.4. The Zoroastrians retaliated, for in their later scriptures *Bundehishn*, XXVIII 9 and *Dadastan-i-Dini*, XXXVI 23, 89 and 120 and XCII, 31, Varuṇa is used in a disparaging sense as typifying selfishness, misdirection and lust."[8]

We also come across great similarity between the Sanskrit and Iranian Languages. "The dialects of Irān, the language of the earliest *Gāthās* (songs) which are attributed to Zoroaster himself, the later dialect of the other surviving parts of the sacred literature of the ancient Persians—the *Avesta*,—and the inscriptions beginning with Darius I about 520 B.C. and best represented in his time but continuing to the last Darius in 338 B.C. are all closely related to the earliest dialect discovered in India, which appears in the hymns of the *Ṛg-veda*. Not only single words and phrases, but even whole stanzas may be transliterated from the dialects of India into dialects of Irān without change of vocabulary or construction, though the appearance of the words is altered by the changes which time and isolation have brought about between the dialects East and West of Afghanistan."[9] A few examples may be cited here. The Sanskrit *sapta* is derived in the same way and means the same as the Iranian *Hapta* ; in the former, the ritual sacrifice is referred to as *Yajña*, in the latter, it is *Yasna* ; the Sanskrit *Hima* corresponds to *Avestan Zyam*, etc. Various references to India in ancient Persian literature show beyond doubt that there existed cultural relations between these countries. "The name for India in the *Avesta* is Hindu, which, like the old Persian Hi(n)du, is derived from the river Indus, (Sanskrit Sindhu), the designation of the stream being transferred to the territory adjacent to it and to its tributaries. The first chapter of the *Avestan Vendidād* (whatever may be the age of the chapter) contains an allusion to a portion of nothern India in a list which it gives of sixteen lands or regions, created by Ahura Mazda and apparently regarded as under Iranian sway. The fifteenth of these domains, according to *Vd.* I, 18, was *Hapta* Hindu, 'Seven Rivers,' a region of 'abnormal heat', probably identical with the territory of Sapta Sindhavas, 'Seven Rivers' in the Veda [See especially *Ṛg-Veda*, 8. 24, 27]."[10] Clement Huart maintains, "It can, therefore, easily be understood that they [Magi] preserved through the centuries down to the formation of the *Avesta*, a mass of beliefs and traditions which are obviously closely akin to those of India."[11] It is also a fact that many rites and sacrifices are common among the Brahmins and the Parsis. "The Darśa Pūrnamāsī Iṣṭi (new and full moon sacrifice seems to correspond with the Darun ceremony of the Parsis. Both are very simple ; the Brāhmaṇas use chiefly the *Puroḍāśa*, or sacrificial cakes, the Parsis the sacred bread (*Darun*) which corresponds to the *puroḍāśa*. The Caturmāsya Iṣṭi, or the sacrifice offered every four months or two seasons, corresponds to the Gahanbar ceremony of the Parsis, which is celebrated six times a year."[12] "The great purification ceremony, by means of cow's urine, as practised by the Parsis to this day, may be compared with a similar observance of the Brāhmaṇas."[13] J. Filliozat in his *The Classical Doctrines of Indian Medicines*. throws light on many aspects of Indo-Irānian medicine, their use and various things connected with the subject. He says : "We will limit ourselves to draw the conclusions from the comparsion of the Vedic ideas relating to medicine with the corresponding ones in Irān. In the Indo-Irānian period, there does not seem to have existed any medical system which the Vedic Āryans could have brought with them into India. On the other hand, right from the Indo-Irānian period, several general notices concerning the cosmic role of natural elements, such as the water, the fire, the wind, had come into being. At the same time an idea of correspondence between these elements and the constituent principles of the body had been developed and this must have prepared the latter day development of the parallel physiologies and cosmologies."

It is difficult to state the exact time of the migration of Iranians to India. Various scholars agree that the cult of Sun-worship was well known during the time of, and even before, the Kuṣānas. "A small figure of Sūrya in black slate found in one of the sites of Gandhāra shows along, with other things, the god wearing boots, and in that of Mathurā the god is dressed in a heavy tunic and with traces of top boots in his partially visible legs."[14] Most probably it was the Śākas or the Scythians who brought the distinct Āryan Sun cult along with them to India. The coins of the Kuṣāna kings bear the name and figure of "Miiro" or Mihira—the ancient Iranian Sun-god. (Whitehead, *Catalogue*, etc. Vol. 1, pp. 188-89, 194-95, 198 etc.) The name 'Mihira' as is well known, has been derived from Mithra the name of one of the Avestan Sun-gods of Irān. It, therefore, appears that the Iranian Sun-god was a familiar deity in the north-western regions of India from the time of Kaniṣka I, who was the first to display a representation of him on his coins. According to most scholars, Kaniṣka reigned in the first century of the Christian era. It is, therefore, permissible to believe that Mihira worship entered India from Irān. It was some time before the advent of and along with the new mode of worship, that the new priests of the cult of the Sun-worshipping Magi sect of Irān also entered this country. "On the coins of Kaniṣka there occurs a figure with the name Miiro-Mihira. It is the Sanskritised form of Persian Mihr, which is a corrupt form of Mithra. The cult must have penetrated to India about the time of that Kuṣāna prince."[15]

Śākadvīpa

The word Iran is not found in the geographical lists of some of the Purāṇas including the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. Instead, we come across the name, Śākadvīpa, in many Purāṇas, the *Mahābhārata* for instance. Śākadvīpa not only includes Iran proper but the term also applies to greater Iran. The legend of Sāmba going to Śākadvīpa to fetch priests to appoint them in the Temple of the Sun, which he constructed on Candrabhāgā, has been mentioned in many texts. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*[16] states that Śākadvīpa is situated, far from Jambudvīpa, on the other side of the salt ocean, and is said to be surrounded by the sea of milk. *The Mahābhārta* (Bhiṣma Parvan, II. states that the Kṣīrasāgara was encircled in parts by the Śākadvīpa. The *Vāyu* (49, 99) states that Kṣīrodasāgara encircled the Śākadvīpa. The *Vāyu* (49.75) also adds that Śākadvīpa touched Dadhi (or Dahac of the Greeks and Maṇḍadeka of the Medians) sea. Gereni has identified Śākadvīpa with Siam, Kambuja and lower Cochin-China.[17] Various other writers identify it with different regions.[18] Buddha Prakash holds the view that Śākadvīpa cannot be located in the Far East as Gereni has done, but that it stands for the regions to the east, north and west of the Caspian Sea up to southern Russia.[19] Moreover Śākadvīpa is even more closely connected with another location, that is, Śakasṭhan, the modern Seiśtan in Iran (cf. Foucher, *La Vieille Route de l' Inde de Bactres a Taxila*, Paris, 1942-47). The name, Seiśtan, which designates a region in Afghanistan, reminds one of the migrations of the Śakas in that part of the world. "Śakasṭhan then doubtless includes the district of Scythians, mentioned in the Periplus, from which flows the river Sinthus (Indus) the greatest of all the rivers that flow into the Evythraean Sea (Indian ocean)". Satya Srava, *The Śakas in India*, p. 9.

The population of Śākadvīpa, according to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, was grouped into four classes viz., Maga, Magaga, Gāṇaga and Mandaga.[20] In the *Mahābhārata*, these people are enumerated as Maga, Masaka, Manasa and Mandaga.[21] Similar references are also available in the *Brahma Purāṇa*,[22] the *Agni Purāṇa*[23] and the *Kūrma Purāṇa*.[24] The first tribe called Maga or Maka corresponds to Saga or Mada. Maga represents Magus, the Latin for an Iranian priest. The second and the third tribes are Magaga and Gāṇaga, the variants being Masaka, Majaka and Ganaka. The words Ganaka or Gāṇaga and Magaga are identical with the names Gog and Magog occurring in the old Testament or with Yajuja and Majuja figuring in the *Qoran*. These are the nomadic people of Iranian affinity, the Cimmerian, the Scythians and the Sarmatians. The fourth tribe is Mandaga, the variants of which are Nandaka, Madaka, Mandaka and Manaka. It stands for the Iranians, both sedentary and nomadic, who lived in what is known as Iran or greater Iran. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions that the four classes, mentioned above, correspond to the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras of India.[25]

In the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, as we have noted above, the four divisions of Iranian society were comparable to the four-fold division of castes in the Indian social system. Accordingly, the Maga, Manga, Gāṇaga and Mandaga have been equated with Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras respectively. There can be no doubt that this is an over-simplification and even misinterpretation of the social system of a foreign society in terms of Indian ideas. Equally it reflects the tendency to bring about a *rapprochement* between the social thinkers of two different peoples. At best it is an attempt to understand Iranian society in terms of Indian concepts. It may equally be motivated by a nostalgic desire to bridge the gulf separating the two peoples. It may also simply be the result of the tendency evidenced, for example, by Manu when he considered several foreign peoples as untruthful

Kṣatriyas (x. 43-44). When the Iranians or the Magas settled in India, became part and parcel of Indian society, the need to emphasize the common points and to disregard the differences became keen. Though this establishment of affinity to the exclusion of other differences was unscientific and unworthy in purely academic terms, yet it is possible to see clearly through the motive behind the distortion of facts as an influential one. This motive was to evolve a basis of understanding between the Indians and the Iranians with a view to the eventual absorption of the latter. In this way, though we cannot but dismiss the aforesaid Purāṇic parallelism as incorrect and untenable, we can ill-afford to ignore the underlying spirit of discovering a *via media* for two peoples living together in amity where they were obliged to do so. But it may also be observed that in India there is a curious tendency to use the four-fold classification not only for describing Indian peoples but also to extend it to all other living beings, such as elephants, horses, trees, etc.

The study of the social system of the Indo-Iranians is one of great complexity. Different branches of these peoples developed different patterns of social organization, but scholars have traced some fundamental similarities. In the main Indo-Iranian society functioned according to a tripartite classification of priests, warriors and husbandmen as Dumezil has shown.[26] This tripartite system is in line with the trinitarian principle of nature which underlies early Indo-Iranian and especially Vedic thought. Subsequently, these three conceptual divisions of society became rigid and crystallised into exclusive castes. With the addition of a servile caste, their number became four, but to say that the four castes of Śākadvīpa are exact counterparts of the four castes of India cannot but be dubbed as a superficial, and even a forced, resemblance concocted by the Paurāṇic writers.

However, the principal object of the foregoing was to show that *Śākadvīpa*, represented Iran in Sanskrit literature, the home of the Magas with their cult of Sun-worship.

Magas

The Magas originally belonged to Media and were a resident tribe or a branch of that tribe. . . . "The net result is that linguistic probabilities tend to reinforce the inference, drawn above on stronger grounds, that the Magi were part of the indigenous population of Media."[27] They settled in Persia and made that country their home. "The Magi were known to the Greeks principally after Alexander as the priests of the Iranians, and later to Romans and Greeks as specially Zoroastrian priests. Zoroaster was known as one of the Magi at least as early as Xanthos of Lydia in the fifth (?) century B.C., but the *Avesta* does not know the word, rather using *athravan* and other terms for priests. All of this would indicate that Herodotus was correct in calling the Magi a Median Tribe."[28] "The Magian are frequently singled out in classical sources as the representatives of the religion of the Persian, *par excellence*, and it would not be amiss to suppose that their influence was very strong. Origen (*Against Celsus*, VI.80,693) said that the word magic was derived from their name, and as magicians and sorcerers, they were known in the west. We may suppose that in Iran they were the priests, who took care of any rites of marriage, burial and the like, and thus they served various deities, the most important of whom, after Ahura Mazdah or Ohrmizd, being Mithra and Anahita."[29] "It is supposed that the Magi were a non-Āryan and possibly a Turaian tribe which was absorbed by the Āryan conquerors. In historical times we see that they became the Levites of Zoroastrianism, and it was they alone who slew the victim, prepared the sacred *hoama*, and held the bundle of *baresma* (bundle of twigs). Moreover, they were deeply versed in astrology, and through this science are connected in the legend of the wise Men from the East, with the birth of Christ. Their influence, as the generations passed, became supreme and it is possibly owing to this fact that the pure beliefs taught by Zoroaster, who was, however himself believed to be of Magian descent, were overlaid with superstitions and rigid formalism. The Persians do not seem to have readily adopted the observances of the Magi, and it was apparently not till the Sassanian period that the religion was embraced in its entirety."[30] During the Sassanid period they had attained a very honourable position in society. They were appointed to high posts. "... one who has the right of judicature, has his *tkeś* (judge) about him. Those are Magi. Krasapa had a brother Rvaxsaya, who was also *tkeś* and moreover *dataraza*, judge and legislator. All these were and always remained Magi; judges, administrators of finance, priests. In all these functions the Greek call them Magoi, as superficially as Europeans call all Mohammadan preachers, judges and scholars 'Mulla'."[31] "By an austere and monogamous life, by a thousand precise observances of sacred rituals and ceremonial cleanliness, by absention from flesh food, and by a simple and unpretentious dress, the Magi acquired, even among the Greeks, a high reputation for wisdom, and among their own people an almost boundless influence. The Persian kings themselves became their pupils, and took no step of consequence without consulting them."[32] "The Magi were considered to be philosophers, they were the teachers of the Achaemenian kings, they were the best of Persians and strove to lead a holy life, and so on."[33] "The power of these Magi over the people, or as a social element, must have been maintained at its height during this whole period, since the revolution of Ardeshīr was evidently an uprising of the Persian masses in the name of Ahura; and their representatives, the Mobads (Magi), were assigned the foremost place in the new order of things, and became the functionaries of a compulsory state religion."[34] After some time, due to some circumstances, their political, judicial and financial powers dwindled away, but they could maintain their religious powers. It is quite likely that the historical phase of struggle between Brahmins and Kṣatriyas in India to attain supreme powers of the state might have repeated itself in Iran also. "As early as the travels of Herodotus they had compensated for their failure to regain political ascendancy by making themselves indispensable to the ritual of the Persian religion." "They could easily use general similarities between their religion and that of the native Iranians so as to prove to the latter their fitness to serve their altars; and the people to whom they ministered, including a large portion of their own kin, would be slower to realise how much change the proselytes were bringing to the religion which they so zealously adopted."[35] "While the Magi were thus a distinct caste of Medians, and apparently the recognised leaders of the subject population in the time of Āryan (Persian) domination, there is no reason for doubt that their ascendancy was essentially religious, like that of the Brāhmaṇas in India." "It would appear that, having failed in their bold bid for political supremacy, as leaders of the people against Āryan invaders, they began to build up power upon their popular vogue as *shamans*. It was easy to insinuate themselves into the open place of priest in the unreformed Iranian nature-worship; as described most accurately by Herodotus (i, 131 ff.), they had only to emphasize certain clear points of resemblance between their own religion and that of the Āryans, veneration of the sun and of fire being the chief."[36] "Their position would seem to correspond to that of the Levites among the Jews or, even more closely, to that of the Brāhmaṇas in India: they were a hereditary caste entrusted with the supervision of the national religion, whatever form it might take and in whatever part of the empire it might be practised."[37] As stated above, their religious functions, they carried with them to India. They contrived or were enabled to divest themselves of obtrusive racial differences that set them apart from the local population, but they did not allow the springs of their religious tradition to dry up. They adjusted themselves successfully to the new conditions but made their own contribution, with changes here and there, to the prevalent Purāṇic religion. It is quite true that Sun-worship was part of the ancient Vedic religion, but the Maga Brahmins gave it a new orientation. The cult now became systematised and made to articulate religious aspirations of the common people. An organised priesthood came into being for propagation its. Its effect was felt in art, literature, numismatics and other departments of directed social life.

There is ample evidence, literary and archaeological, indigenous and foreign, to prove that the Maga Brāhmiṇs came from Iran along with other foreign people. Brāhmaparvan, chapter 139 of the *Bhaviṣya Purāna*, gives us an account of the Magas whom Sāmba brought from Śākadvīpa so that they might be installed as priests in the Temple of the Sun. "It is stated in the *Riyazu-s-salatin* that, in the time of Rai Mahārāj, a person coming from Persia perverted the people of Hindustan to Sun-worship. In the time of Rai Suraj a Brahmin coming from the mountains of Jharkhand entered his service and taught the Hindus idol-worship and preached that everyone should prepare a gold or silver or stone image of his father and grandfather, should devote himself to their worship, and this practice became more common than other practices, And in the present day in the religious practice of the Hindus, the worship of idols of the sun and of fire is very common."[38] Varāhamihira (*Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, chapter 60, 19) advises that the installation and consecration of the deities of the Temple of the Sun should be caused to be performed by the Magas. The name "Mihira" as is well known, is derived from Mithra, the name of the Avestan Sun-god of Iran. "There is an inscription at Govindpur in the Gayā district, dated 1137-38 A.D. in the opening stanza of which the Magas, who sprang from the sun, are represented to have been brought into the country [Iran] by Sāṁba."[39] "From Iran there were probably Mazdean infiltrations in Christian times, confined to a limited area. They have left traces in the 'Mithra' or Mihira' of the Kuṣāna coins, in the Magas or priests described in some of the Purāṇas, in the Sūrya of the *Brhatsaṁhitā*, who is dressed in Iranian costume and in a few other facts of similar...kind."[40] The Gondpur inscription of the Śaka year 1059 expressly states that the Magas were the Brāhmaṇas of the Śakadvīpa (Iran) and, significantly, came out of the body of the Sun-god. In the Sanskrit anthology, *Sadukti-Kāraṇāmṛta* compiled in 1205 A.D. are to be found and verses of the six poets bearing the name of the six of the Maga Brāhmaṇas, mentioned in the epigraph."[41]' "Various works of Varāhamihira distinctly point to the fact that he was a devotee of the Sun." "Scholars have long since come to the conclusion, that the Sun-worshipping Magas, mentioned in ancient Indian literature and inscriptions, were originally the same as the Magi priests of ancient Iran. A section of these foreign priests migrated to India at some early date. The Magi priests of ancient Iran were noted for their Sun-worship."[42]

The Doctrines and Qualifications of the Magas

According to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* a Sun-worshipper is called a Maga, because he meditates on the syllable म.[43] This syllable was regarded as the symbol for the sun. The religion of the Magas is the worship of the Sun. He is the supreme lord and the highest sanctum of worship for the Magas. They believe both in knowledge and action. They must grow beards because their seers grew them. All *munis* of Śākadvīpa took their meals silently; therefore, it is enjoined upon laity to remain silent while dining. They must wear *avyanga*. They may not touch unclean objects like a dead body or a woman in menses. "Brāhma Parvan", chapter 171 of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, describes in detail ritual observances required of Maga Brāhmaṇas. These are summarised below.

They should eat only after worshipping the sun. They cook a meal for the sake of the Sun, cohabit for the sake of children and earn so that they might donate the proceeds. They should earn their keep with justice, have control over their passions, overpowering sense perception if it is necessary for that purpose, remain unmoved and firm in the face of difficulties, eat a diet made up of fruit, vegetables, etc.

F.C. Davar also mentions similar qualities and customs of the Magi of Iran.[44] "The great Guru and law-giver of the Maga Brāhmaṇas was named Jarṣasta. [It is needless to add that this word is the same as Zarathustra, the prophet of ancient Iran.] The Maga Brāhmaṇas tied the *avyanga* or the sacred cord round their waists. [This *avyanga* is known as *aivyaongha* in the *Avesta* and as *kushti* in Persian. The Brāhmaṇas wear their sacred thread over their shoulders, and across the chest and back, the Parsis, round their waists.] The Maga Brāhmaṇas were Sun-worshippers. [From ancient times to the present age, this characteristic is common to the Parsi and the Gāyatṛi chanting Hindu]. The Maga Brāhmaṇas in their ceremonies used the twig known as *baresma*. [The Parsis used the same twig while the Hindus used a king of grass *darbha*]. The Maga Brāhmaṇas observed silence during their meals . . . [They] used to grow beards......[and] tied the *padan* on their mouths. (Even today the Parsi priests tie a kerchief called *padan*, known in the *Avesta* as *paitidan*, on their mouths to prevent the spray of saliva from falling into the sacred fire during prayer.) The Maga Brāhmaṇas during their ceremonies held a long-handled ladle. ...They attached great importance to personal cleanliness and took regular baths ...their women during their menses secluded themselves from society."

. The practice of growing beards followed by the Magas is shared by the Iranians in general to which many references are found in literature.[45] "The attention of Kālidāsa is particularly fixed on the beards of the Persians. In this connection a legend mentioned in the *Harivaṁsa Purāṇa* is very interesting. King Sāgara, who was bent upon destroying the Śakas, Yavanas, Kāmbujas, Pāradas and Pahlavas [whom he had kept under custodyas prisoners of war,] relented and released the first after having half of their head shaved, the second and the third after having the whole of their head shaved, the fourth after compelling them to dishevel hair and the fifth after forcing them to keep their beards. A pointed mention of the beards of the Pahlavas or Persians is also found in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (iv. 3.). In the *Mahābhārata* (xii. 65) the Pahlavas are described as 'hairy'. The art of that period attests to the prominence of beard in the representation of the faces of the Persians. In a picture found at Dandan Oiliq, of a four-armed Bodhisattava dressed in the guise of a Persian knight the black beard and whiskers are prominently displayed. Kālidāsa refers to the beard of the Persians as honey-combs. The Sassanian monarchs are shown as having curly beards passed through rings. The coins of Pero and Varahran reveal such beards. Such beards were the exclusive privilege of the Sassanian monarchs (Paruck, *Sassanian Coins*, p. 350)"[46] "A fragment of a relief found at the village of Ergili, near the lake of Maniyas, in the neighbourhood of Dascyleion in Asia Minor, represents a scene of sacrifice. Two figures, one of whom is bearded and seems to be a Magus, stand on the right of a kind of architectural niche, the visible upright of which is surmounted by the protome of a bull."[47]

Bhojakas : Their Origin

Many references about the origin of the Bhojakas are found in the *Bhaviṣva Purāṇa*. A story of their origin, as given in this *Purāṇa*, "Brāham Parvan," chapter 117, is summarised below.

> The son of king, Pṛyavṛta, built a temple for the Sun-god Śākadvīpa. A golden image of the Sun was also set up. There was no one, however to perform the rites and services associated with the worship. The king's son them told the Sun about the problem of worship in the temple The sun by an act of mental concentration caused eight men to come out of his body. Two came from out of his forehead, two emerged out of his arms, two from his rays and two from his feet. The Sun advised them to perform the duties of worship in the temple, which the king had built in Sākadvīpa. 'A Sun-worshipper is called a *bhojaka* because he worships the Sun with incense, garland, and other things."[48] "They are the descendants from those 10 of the 18 Sun-worshipping Magas who were married to the girls of the Bhoja family by Sāmba."[49] R.C. Hazra[50] is of the opinion that, with the passage of time, the Sun-worshipping Magas became bifurcated into two groups known as Magas and Bhojakas.[51] It may also be noted that the designation of a Bhojak is not restricted to the Sun-worshipper. The word refers to 'eating', or 'enjoying' as well as to the giver of food. We find in the *Padama Purāṇa* ('Bhūmī Kaṇḍa' V. 71) Aditi asks for a son enjoying the place of Indra, '*putraḥ surendrapada-bhojakaḥ*', and she has Indra born to her as a son.

In various passages in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, their characteristics, duties, powers, and privileges are discussed. They must study the Vedas, bathe thrice, remember the Sun five times a day and refuse food from the house of a Śūdra. Says the Sun. "They give me food (*bhojan*) daily, therefore, they are called Bhojakas." "As a wife serves her husband, a pupil his teacher, so Bhojakas serve me".[51] "There is no śāstra like [the] Veda, no river like [the] Gangā, no good deed like the performance of Aśvamedha, no pleasure like the birth of a son, no god like Sun, similarly there is nothing like Bhojakas before [the] Sun."[52] After stating various other qualities of the Bhojakas, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* adds whatever has been done by Bhojakas should be treated as having been done by the Sun himself.[53]

A comparative study of the qualities of the Magas and Bhojakas, mentioned above, goes to prove that the Bhojakas came to enjoy a better status and position in society than the Magas. According to the *Bhaviṣya Purāna* the Bhojakas came first to be regarded as holy Brāhmaṇas, as much as, or even more than, the Magas. "None attains final emancipation without becoming a Bhojaka".[55] After cutting the wood of a tree for making an idol of the Sun, Brāhmaṇas and the Bhojakas should be given *dakṣiṇā*".[56] (Here the authors do not mention the Magas.) From evidence provided by inscriptions, we also come to know that Bhojakas enjoyed a respectable position at least down to the eighth century A.D.[57] The distinct information which the grant (Prakṛta grant of the Pallava King, Sivaskandavarman, translated by G. Bühler) conveys, is scanty and, in the present state of knowledge of the history of Southern India, not practically useful. The Pallava King, Sivaskandavarman of Kāñci, who was affiliated to the Brahmnical *gotra* of Bhardvāja, confirmed and enlarged, in the eighth year of his reign, the donation, made formerly by the great king, the Lord Bappa [probably his father], to certain Bhojaka Brāhmaṇas, who resided at Āpitti, and who were free-holders of the village of Chillarekaodnika." (*Epigraphica Indica*. Vol. I. p. 4.) Narasiṁhagupta Bāladitya and Jivitagupta II, who reigned in Magadha in the fifth and eighth centuries A.D. respectively, are said to have shown respect to the Brāhmaṇas of Magadha and to have made donations of land to them. The reasons for their gaining this dominant position cannot be properly ascertained in the present state of historical knowledge. One of the reasons may be that the Bhojakas did not allow themselves to become conspicuously associated in the popular mind with their foreign origin, whereas the Magas did not really shed their foreign provenance. (Reference to this fact has already been made.) Thus they proved their Indian origin, fitted themselves easily and comfortably into the religious movements, and won approval for their ways in the eyes of the Brāhmaṇas, who were the chief exponents of the Vedic religion. It is just possible that the foreign influence of the Magas may not have been felt at the earlier stages, but the people might well have objected to it as snobbery in later times. The Bhojakas were quick to learn from the example and learnt not to assert or obtrude their foreign origin and brought it in close conformity with the disposition and tendencies of Indian religion so as to hold their place in society. In this way they could remain the spokesmen of their sectarian views, to which conformism was very vital, and thus continued to influence the lives of the people.

Fire-worshipping Magas

Besides the Sun-worshipping Magas and the Bhojakas, a new class of priests, who were the fire-worshipping followers of Zoroaster, also came to India in the wake of the former. Their contribution to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is meagre. Only a few widely scattered stanzas have been devoted to them in the text. They are called upon to hold themselves in readiness to perform their ministrations in the service of Agni, and they should perform their daily ritual addressed to that god.

Evidences of Foreign Influence

The birth of the Magas as stated in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* leaves no doubt about the Iranian influence on them. The gist of the story of their birth given in "Brāhma Parvan," chapter 139, of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is summarised below :

> Nikṣūbhā, the daughter of *ṛṣi* Ṛjihva, used to worship Agni. Once the Sun happened to see her and was powerfully and uncontrollably attracted towards her beauty. Their physical union led to the birth of a child who was known as Jaraṣabda. At this Nikṣūbhā was greatly ashamed of herself but gathered courage to tell her father. Sorrowful and penitent, she told him everything. The father was much displeased to hear the childish and objectionable behaviour of his young daughter. Regretfully he cursed her saying that her son would be unworthy. After all, she was his daughter, and he loved her. But her disgraceful act required temporal punishment. She began to weep at the prospect of the dire punishment. She remembered the Sun and he appeared before her. She related to him her father's curse. The Sun-god said: 'Your father is a *ṛṣi*. His curse cannot be revoked. I can only say that the descendants of your son will read the Vedas and become worthy of worship. They shall wear the sacred girdle *avyanga*.'

The above-mentioned Jaraṣabda, the son of Sun, is the famous Zoroaster, who became one of the prophets of Iran, and his religion was to become the state religion under the Sassanids. The sacred girdle is known as *aivyangha* in Iran.[58] According to Gopinath Rao, "the origin of the *avyaṅga* or *ahyaṅga*, the *avoyonhana* of the Parsis, is given as follows : During each *ṛtu* (season) there came to the Sūrya *maṇḍal* one each from among the *ṛṣis*, *devatas*, *nāgas*, *gaṅdharvas*, *apsaras*, *yakṣas* and *rākṣasas*. Then came a *ṛtu* when it was Vasūki's turn to go and the *nāga* presented Sūrya with an *avyaṅga* or *ahyaṅga* which had been produced from his body. This cord was made of drawn gold and was half white and half red in colour. From this time onwards, the followers of the Sūrya cult were required to wear a similar cord round their loins."[58] That the Iranians regarded the wearing of *avyanga* as a sacred rite has been mentioned above. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* enjoins upon the Bhojakas to wear it at all times. "A *Bhojaka* becomes pure after wearing it. The Sun bestows his benevolences on him. A Bhojaka, who does not wear it, becomes impure. He is not entitled to the worship of the Sun. He, who worships the Sun and goes about without wearing it, goes to hell. He becomes devoid of progeny and health."[59] Speaking about the greatness of *avyanga*, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* states that, "this (*avyaṅga*) is made of all Vedas, all gods, all beings, all the worlds. In its middle stays Brahmā, in its basis [*mūl*] stays Viṣṇu and in its top, Śiva."[60] So it is a cosmic girdle, a fact, which shows the greatness of *avyaṅga* in the Iranian religion as practised by the Magas.

The Maga Brāhmaṇas were staunch worshippers of the Sun in Iran. Under the Sassanid dynasty, this cult had a large number of followers. "One thing which attracts our attention after studying Christian sources is the fact that, under the Sassanid dynasty, the Sun has been given a very prominent place. Yazdagird says, 'I swear by the Sun who lights the world with his rays and gives warmth to all creatures'. This king has recalled the Sun thrice or four times very seriously. When the Christian priests were called to leave their religion, they were told that the worship of Sun meant the abandonment of their religion. Shapūr II commuted the death sentence of Saimen Bar Sabbei on the condition that he should be ready to worship the sun."[61] "To Mitra, the lord of wide pastures, we sacrifice, the truth-speaking, eloquent in assembly, the thousand-eared, the shapely, the myriad-eyed, the exalted (lord of) the broad look-out, the strong, the sleepless, the vigilant."[62]

Śāṁba, the son of Kṛṣṇa, had brought Maga Brāhmaṇas from Śākadvīpa. His purpose of bringing them was to appoint them as priests in the temple of the Sun which he had erected for the removal of disease, i.e., leprosy. The faith that the disease could be treated and cured by solar grace bears Iranian influence. "The ancient Persians considered the disease of leprosy a product of the curse of the Sun. According to Herodotus, (*Herodotus*, [illegible]8) 'if one of the citizens has leprosy or the white (leprosy), the sh[illegible]d

डा: डिल्बी... कल्याणी नेगमी स्मा... पुस्तकालय
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neither come to the city, nor mingle with the other Persians. They say that they contract these (diseases) because of having committed some sin against the Sun."[63] "The treatment of sickness...... and the disgusting ablutions and purifications with the urine of cows are among the weak features of this wonderful religion."[64] Some of the Indian writers have also noted this belief. "In the seventh century, Mayūra, who lived at the court of Harṣavardhana, composed one hundred stanzas to obtain relief from the white leprosy from which he suffered."[65] Gopicandra, in his commentary on the *Saṁkṣiptasāra* says that the cures from disease result from the grace of Sūrya.[66]

The cult of fire-worship occupied a unique position in the religion of Zoroaster. "The fire-worshipping Magas were not allowed to extinguish the fire of their hearths. Water and fire should not touch each other."[67] Reference to five kinds of Agni in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* also attest to the foreign origination of the new divinity.[68] "Fire has been given an important position in Zoroastrianism. In the *Avesta*, it has five different kinds, that (1) which is in daily use ; (2) which is present in human and animal bodies ; (3) which is present in trees ; (4) which is in the clouds ; and (5) which burns in the heaven before Ahura Mazdah."[69] "Yasna invokes successively five kinds of fire. Neryosengh translates the first name as Udayarajyotis, or 'eminent light', and explains that this isev er the luminous fire found near Ahura Mazda, but the Pahlvi version renders it as 'of great utility'. The second kind 'who aims at the good,' is according to Neryosengh who agrees with the traditions, the excellent friend', one who finding itself permanently in the body, eats and drinks. The third becomes *Vanaspatistha* in Sanskrit meaning 'one who livies in the trees', 'one who always drinks but never masticates'. The fourth in the fire is the form of lightning which never drinks nor eats and the last one is the fire found in milk." (J. Filliozat, *op.cit.*, p. 58).

Chapter 69, "Brāhma Parvan" of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* deals with the interpretation of dreams. That a chapter of this nature should be added to our *Purāṇa* at all is not without significance. The Maga Brahmins were expert in matters of this kind and when it came to their turn, they added one chapter in this *Purāṇa*. "The Magi were renowned for their skill in divining by dreams..."[70] Since the Magi were especially concerned with the interpretation of dreams, there is appropriatness in the function assigned to the queen of [the] night."[71] "The higher ranks among them were sages. the lower, diviners and sorcerers, readers of the stars and interpreters of dreams" ; the very word magic is taken from their name"[72] References to this faith as well as to their use of *baresma* have already been made. Chapter 193 "Brāhma Parvan" of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is devoted to the importance of twigs got from different kinds of trees. The twigs used from different trees will fetch different rewards to the fire-worshipper. It has also been stated that the Maga Brahmins tied *padan* on their mouths to maintain cleanliness. The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, too, commend to the Magas the practice of covering their mouths.[73]

The Magas were proficient in the science of astronomy. It has been stated above that they were expert in the knowledge of what the stars portended for man. "Astronomy received much attention in ancient Persia, as is obviously implied by the current tradition of the Magi, the sacerdotal class of the Medes and Persians. They were highly skilled in divination, an art which depended largely upon a knowledge of the heavenly bodies, astrology and astronomy being sister sciences in antiquity..."[74] 'There are kindred allusions in Sassanian literature to 'the calculation of the astronomers' or to 'the computations made by astrologers with regard to observing favourable or unfavourable conjunctions of the stars'."[75] "The Śākadvīpa Brāhmaṇas (also called the Ācārya Brāhmaṇas or *gṛha vipras* of Bengal ; the *sevakas* of Rajputana and Śākadvīpis in Bihar and U.P.) are (like the Magi) astrologers, astronomers and physicians."[76] Similar ideas have also been expressed by other writers as well.[77] It is also a well-known fact that, at the time of the birth of Christ, the three Magi priests predicted that a g reat savisour had been born.

These attainments and capabilities of the Magas found full expression in India. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* was made use of by them for prophesying. The Sun, the centre of the whole planetary system, was of supreme importance for astronomers and thus its praises were sung by them. D. K. Biswas ("The Maga Ancestry of Varāhamihira," *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXV, 1949, pp. 175-83) has tried to establish that Varāhmihira was a Maga Brāhmaṇa. He concludes his inquiry stating that the astronomer (Varāhamihira) was in so many ways connected with the Maga Brahmins. In this regard, a shrewd argument has been advanced by S. E. Sanjana, who invites our attention to a certain verse of a Zarathushtrian scripture named the *Meher Yasht* (Yasht X), according to which, while Mihir (the Sun) advances, he is accompanied by Verethraghna (Vritrahana or Behram) in the form of a *varaz* (*varāha* or boar). From this Avestan passage one can see the close connection between *varaha* (Boar) and Mihir (Sun), which words go to form the name of the Hindu astronomer, and thus supports the theory that he was a Maga Brahmin (F. C. Davar, *Iran and India through the Ages*, p. 66). In the *Bhaviṣya Purāna*, Chapters 6, 7 and 8 of "Madhyama Parvan," Part II, have been devoted to the science of astronomy. It is quite possible that the activities of the Magas in India might have given sufficient impetus to the popularisation of the science of astronomy. Another point of resemblance between the Sun cult practised by the Maga Brāhmaṇas, according to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*[78], and that professed and followed by Magi of Iran, is that, in both of them, the Sun is said to have produced eight emanations from his body each of which came to be regarded as a distinct and divine being.

The opposite numbers in Iran of the eight Indian *bhojakas* who issued forth from the body of the Sun are eight Magas-Mihira, Nikṣubhā, Strausa, Isā Garumpat, Rājña, Rāginī, Piṅgalā, Daṇḍanāyaka ; these are all emanations from the body of Mithra. When; during the rule of Parthians, Scythians, etc., Buddhism was introduced in the north-west, it also adopted many features of the then prevailing Maga religion. For instance, in the art of Bamiyan, eight Buddhas are represented as eight Magas as shown by Godard. Another point of contact between the Indian and Iranian cult of Sun-worship is the god Sroṣa, mentioned in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. It is quite true that the spellings of this word are not the same at different places in this *Purāṇa*. At one place[74] this god is referred as Śroṣa and at another[79], the name is Srauṣa. R. C. Hazra, is of opinion that, in the *Avesta Sraosha* (Obedience) has been mentioned as a divine being and a companion of Mithra as well.[80] Nārada describes him as a god-in-attendance of the Sun along with other gods like Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Rudra, etc., when they visited the Sūrya loka.[81] "*Sraosha* is the bond of obedience that unites man to God : he is the intermediary between them and can thus be spoken of as the path to God or his throne (*gatu*). No sacrifice to the wise Lord is valid unless he is present at it, for it is he who carries up to heaven the sacrifice of himself that *Haoma* makes to his father." (R. C. Zaehnar, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, p. 95.) According to Gopinath Rao (*Hindu Iconography*, Vol. 1, Part II, pp. 304-5) the word *Sru* is known to be employed to denote movement, and to this the suffix *Su* is added. Because he travels or goes he is known by the alternative appellation of Srao-sha. Mr. Nagendra Nath Vasu has pointed out that the name of the attendant of the Sun, as known in the *Avesta*, is Sraoshava or simply Srosh sometimes." But Talati is of opinion that Sraosha implies the spiritual faculty of being able to hear the words of God within one , or receiving divinely Revealed Truth, as coming from the highest spiritual level of Life through one's higher Divine Mind. (*The Light on the Zoroastrian Mazdean-asian Religion*, p. 56.) Another reference is to the god, Māṭhara in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.[82] According to R.C. Hazra the name Māṭhara may have been derived from the Avestan Māthra.[83]

Powers and Privileges of Magas in Iran and India Compared

A cursory study of the powers and privileges enjoyed by the Magas in Iran will reveal beyond a doubt that they enjoyed great supremacy. "The Magas gave a sacred and religious colouring to their worldly supremacy. And due to this, they could interfere in the important problems of everyday life of the people. We can say that the life of every person from the cradle to the grave passed under their supervision. . . . They decided mutual feuds of the people after due deliberations. The influence of the Magas was not due to the fact that they enjoyed spiritual supremacy or [that] the government had granted them abundant facilities, or they performed the ceremonies at the time of birth, marriage, etc., but it was due to the fact that they had vast riches coming from *jāgirs* and properties. They had complete political liberty. We can say that they had made a state within a state."[84] "The influence of the priests was the greater because they owned large landed estates, chiefly in Adharbayjan, the ancient Media Atropatene, and religious fines, tithes, and voluntary gifts supplied them with abundant resources. The Magi lived by their own laws, Ammianus Marcellinus tells us ; that is, 'they are accepted as a state within a state, having canonical institutions different from the laws of the kingdom'."[85] "The Elam cuneiform tablets of Persepolis teach that the Magi like the Mohammadan *Qazis* had the judicial and financial administration in their hands."[86] From this we can easily say that the Magas in Iran, in the real sense of the word, ran the administration of the country. They enjoyed secular and spiritual powers. It was the result of Zoroastrianism being the state religion during the Sassanid period.

The above-mentioned powers and privileges of the Magas were restricted to a considerable extent when they came and settled in India. They had to face the entrenched power and monopoly of the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas in India. Thinking them to be foreigners, the people of India were reluctant to follow them in matters of religion. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* nowhere states anything about their financial, judicial and political powers. But during Parthian rule in the north-west and the Sassanid hegemony later, they must have enjoyed considerable prestige.

There could be various reasons for the subsequent decline of their power and prestige in India and these may be stated as under :

1. Sun-worship was not the official religion in India and hence, their counsels could not have been very influential with the rulers of this country ;
2. the Brahmins and the Kṣatriyas, who had traditionally enjoyed vast powers and privileges in India for a long time, could not tolerate that a new class of people should usurp their supremacy ;
3. the foreign people, who exercised political authority in India for short periods over portions of the country, were ultimately defeated and absorbed in the Hindu fold. The priests of the defeated people could not hope to exert much influence ;
4. the people of India had become used to the supremacy of the Brahmins from Vedic times. Their customs, ceremonies and rites, etc. had been evolved and propagated by the themselves. The people had full faith in them. They had no liking for the new foreign priests, and did not, therefore, follow them unless the latter brought their sectarian religious views in line with the religious propensities of the time.

Indian Evidence about Maga Brāhmaṇas

An important piece of evidence that Śāṁba, the son of Kṛṣṇa, built a temple to the Sun on the Candrabhāgā river in Multan and went to Śākadvīpa to fetch priests, has been cited above. In the *Mahābhārata*, we have numerous references to Iranian cults. In particular, the mention of Harimedhas and his maiden daughter, Dhvajavati, reminds one of Hurmuz, the Sassanian form of Ahura Mazdah and his daughter Hverenah. In the *Mahābhārata* also there is a reference to the coming of the Magas ; Nārada learnt of the Bhakti cult in Śākadvīpa near Kṣīra-sāgara, and observed that the god was being worshipped with offerings of corn and flowers rather than with animal sacrifices. According to the *Kathāsarītasāgara* (IX,4,20), Narvāhanadatta worshipped the god Viṣṇu in Śākadvīpa, who was pleased to give him nymphs. Śākadavīpa is also mentioned in the *Harṣacarita* (ed. Parab, 5th ed. pp. 59, 216 and 258) and *Kadāmbarī* (ed. Vaidya, p. 259) of Bāṇabhaṭṭa and the Vāsavadattā (ed. Hall, p. 103) of Subandhu. To adduce evidence for a second time in proper chronological sequence, these references from Indian sources show that the Maga Brahmins were known in India.

History of Maga Brāhmaṇas in India

The Magas, with their own political and cultural traditions, seem to have been active in India. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is the result of their activities in this country. Due to their organised and continuous endeavours, a special school of Sun-worship which was known as Saura came into being.[87] Sauras or Sauryas "is the name of a small sect in central or southern India, whose special object of worship is the Sun". "The influence of Saura Brāhmaṇas in Jharkhand is even now very strong. Though no longer claiming their right to be designated as Śākadvīpās or Scythians, they live as a group distinct from the great bulk of the Indian Brahmin population. In modern times they call themselves Āngirasas and worship the Sun under the name of Narasiṁha or Raghunāth. Even today they are reputed to be good astrologers and physicians (of the Magas). Of the four Vedas only Āngirasa is nowadays accepted by the Saura Brāhmaṇa and their daily duties performed according to the rules laid down in it. For this reason these Brāhmaṇas are known as Ānigirasas and their code cf ritual is known as *Āṅgirasakalpa*. From the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, (1.106.10) we also learn that all the good fruits which the followers of Rati, Sama, Yaju derive from studying their respective Vedas are enjoyed by the Atharvas and Atharvangiras from worshipping the Sun-god alone."[88] "Some of them migrated to Sūryapur in the district of Balasor and then to Konarak on the sea coast. The thriving village of Soro in Balasor district was formerly known as Saurapur or Sūryapur. Evidence is not wanting to prove the great influence exerted by the Saura Brāhmaṇas in the village of Soro. From the inscription engraved on the stone pedestal of the Saptakum ārikā discovered in the village Chorā Shahi near Soro, we find that, even in the 15th century A.D., a temple was dedicated to the Sun and that Sun-worship existed in that part of the country in that later Period." According to the manual of the administration of the Madras Presidency, (Madras, 1885-93, III, 863) those of the south Drāviḍa Brāhmaṇas form a sub-tribe of that caste, and are very few in number. According to Wilson, they scarcely differ from other Hindus in their general observances."[89] "There seems to be no reason to reject or doubt the statement of Śaṅkara in the tenth century, that in his time, there existed distinct sects of Sun-worshippers, Sauryas."[90] This school must have come into existence after the Magas had been absorbed into the Hindu fold, adopted Indian traditions and had given up their foreign traits. Inscriptions, seals, copper-plate grants, and temples showing beyond doubt that the cult of Sun-worship was widely prevalent in India may be accepted as bearing out the distinct identity of the Sauryas and the religion was followed by kings and common people alike. The Mandasor stone inscription dated 472-73 A.D. and engraved during the reign of Bandhuvarman, a feudatory of Kumāragupta I, states that a guild of silk-weavers built a temple of the Sun. In course of time, under other Kings, part of this temple fell into disuse, therefore, the whole of this noble house of Sun was repaired by the wealthy guild. The Deo-Barṇārk inscription of Jivitagupta mentions the Bhojaka Brāhmaṇas who were in charge of a Sun temple. In the same inscription, Madhavgupta, Devaguptadeva, Viṣṇuguptadeva, etc., are said to be devout worshippers of the Sun. The Jainad inscription of King Jagadeva refers to a Paramāra minister, Lolarka, hailing from the Dāhimā family whose wife Padmāvati constructed the Nimāditya temple. The stone inscription (The Gaya inscription of a king named Yakṣapāla) consists of 21 lines and opens with *Om namo Sūryāya* (Verse 1), "May the Sun protect you !"—he who illuminates the lotus which is the universe, filled with a mass of honey—the object of senses, having for bees the multitudes of living beings, (and) charming with its leaves—the right region." (*The Indian Antiquity*, Vol. XV, p. 65.)

Among the sealings found at Rājghat, in Benaras, one bears the name of Śrī Lolākaditya and a representation of a fire altar over which a solar disc is placed. Another seal refers to Gabha Steśvara. These facts show both the prevalence of Sun-worship in ancient Vedic India and its extended popularity outside the priesthood of the cult.

It appears from the coins of Toramāṇa and his son, Mihirakula, that both of them were worshippers of the Sun. The coin of the former bears a wheel-symbol. On the reverse of another coin dating from the reign of his son, Mihirakula, there is the figure of a fire-altar and an attendant, an emblem probably adopted from Sassanian coinage (Rapson. *Indian Coins*, Plate 4, Nos. 19-20,1897). The former is a symbol of the Sun and the latter of fire-worship. During the reign of Mihirakula, a Sun temple was built on the Gopa mountain, as stated in an inscription, from Gwalior which commences with an invocation to the Sun and which is stated to have been composed by a person named Keśava.

The Indore copper-plate grant of Skandagupta I, dated 465-66 A.D., records how a Brāhmaṇa, named Devaviṣṇu, endowed *in perpetuo* a Sun temple at Indrapura, a deserted village. The Khoh copper-plate grant of Mahārāja Sarvanāth, dated 512-13 A.D., reveals how he gifted a village named Aśramaka on the north bank of the river Tamasa, the modern Thauns, in the Mahiyar State. Four persons were appointed to effect the repair and maintenance of the temple and to provide corn, perfumes, incense, garlands and lamps in a temple of Viṣṇu (Bhāgavata) under the name of the Sacred Sun.

Among the rulers of Valabhī, perhaps the only Maitraka ruler, who was a Sun-worshipper, was Mahārāja Dharapaṭṭa, the younger brother and successor of Dhruvasena I. In the Māliyā copper-plate of Mahārāja Dhruvasena II, he is referred to as a most devout follower of the Sun. Besides this king, the names of other kings like Dharsena, Droṇasiṁha, Dhruvasena, Dharapaṭṭa have also been cited as the most devout followers of the god Maheśvara. In the copper-seal inscription of Harṣa Vardhana (Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionun Indicarum*, Vol, III., p. 232) it is stated that "there was . . . the most devout worshipper of the Sun, the Mahārājha, the illustrious Rājya Vardhana. His son [who meditated on] his feet, [was] the most devout worshipper of the Sun, the Mahārāja, th illustrious Āditya Vardhana, [begotten] of the illustrious Mahādevi (?) His [son, who meditated on his feet], [was] ... the most devout worshipper of the Sun, the Paramabhaṭṭāraka and Mahārajadhirāja, the glorious Prabhākara Vardhana, begotten of the Devi, (the illustrious) Māhāsena Gupta, . . . [and] who was employed in regulating all the the castes and stages of a religious life."

These seals, copper-plate grants and inscriptions show the influence of the activities of the Maga Brahmins on the people. That kings, ministers and other great persons built temples for the worship of the Sun provides a measure of the prevalence of this cult among ordinary people. Its popularity not only among common people but also among kings up to medieval times, can be easily seen from the fact that Akbar, the great, was profoundly influenced by it. Hirānanda Śāstri in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 9, Calcutta, 1933, proves that Akbar was a worshipper of the Sun.

It appears that the Maga Brāhmaṇas devoted their energies and capacities to the propagation, through the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, of their old religion keeping in view the altered conditions in a new country. The success measured by the large number of their followers was considerable. Fortified by the evidence amassed above, one may safely postulate that Sun-worship continued to exist long after its introduction into this country with varying fortunes. The history of the cult has been elegantly traced by A. Barth. He states, "But the most powerful of all these religions, the only one which has really been able to rival those of Viṣṇu and Śiva, the only one withal concerning which we have numerous and positive testimonies, is that of the Sun. Ever since Vedic times the Sun has not ceased to figure prominently in the pantheon, as well as in the poetic and religious literature of India. A great part of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is specially consecrated to him. Traces of his worship are found on the coins of the Satrap kings who ruled over Gujrāt towards the Christian era, as well as on those of the Indo-Scythian princes. At a later date in the same region, one at least of the kings of Valabhī is designated in the inscriptions ; Āditya-bhakta, i.e., a worshipper of the Sun. A little more towards the north, at Multān, in the Punjāb, a temple was erected to this god, the most celebrated in India, the splendour of which has been described by Hiuen-T'sang. He says (*Travels of Hiuen-T'sang*, S. Beal, Vol. IV, p. 463). 'There is a temple dedicated to the Sun, very magnificent and profusely decorated. The image of the Sun *deva* is cast in yellow gold and ornamented with rare gems. Its divine insight is mysteriously manifested and its spiritual powers made plain to all. Women play their music, light their torches, offer their flowers and perfumes to honour it. This custom has been continued from the very first. The kings and the high families of the Five Indies never fail to make their offerings of gems and precious stones. They have founded a house of mercy in which they provide food, drink and medicines for the poor and the sick, affording succour and sustenance. Men from all countries come here to offer their prayers ; there are always some thousands doing so. On the four sides of the temple there are tanks with flowering groves where one can wander about without restraint.' " Another Sun temple was situated at Sutar. According to *Varāha Purāṇa*, (177, 55-7) it is said to be on the eastern mountain. In the *Brāhma Purāṇa* (R. C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, p. 106) it is called Koṇāditya or Koṇārak. It is evidently the modern Konarak, the famous temple of the Sun, about 30 miles from the town of Pūri in Orissa. The existing temple was built by the Gaṅga King, Narasiṁha I, in the 13th century A.D. About its architectural importance, Marshall says, (*The Monuments of Sāñchī*, p. 1) "If the question were put to me, which are the noblest monuments of ancient India, I should name without hesitation the following : among Mohammadan monuments, the Taj Mahal at Agra ; among Hindus, the black pagoda of Koṇārak and the Kailaśa temple at Ellora, and among the Buddhists, the frescoed cave-temples of Ajantā and the Stūpas of Sāñcī." According to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (1.129.16) there was also a Sun temple at Kālapriya or the southern bank of the Jamuna. Kālapriya is identified with the modern Kālpi. We get an idea of the temple area from Govind III's Cambay plates, from a description therein of King Indrā III's march on, and devastation of, the Gurjara Pratihāra capital, Kanauj (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol.VII, pp. 36 f). The courtyard of (the temple) Kālapriya was rendered uneven by the strokes of the tusks of his [i.e. Indrā III's] rutting elephants. His horses crossed the unfathomable Yamunā which rivals the ocean in expanse. He completely devastated the enemy's city so that even now it has become greatly renowned among the people by the name, Kuśasthala (land full of grass). Sun-temples were also constructed in the south. "But it is certainly curious to find a temple in the south Indian village of Sūryanārkoyil in Tanjore district dedicated entirely to the worship of the Sun-god and the planets, the former being the object of worship as the principal deity and the latter as attendant deities. This village must have evidently received its name from the temple of Sūrya built there. It is stated in one of the inscriptions found in the temple that it was built in the reign of Kuloṭṭuṅga Choladeva (1060-1118 A.D.)." "Traces of the ancient Mitra cult are still to be found at Ayodhiā, Purāṇgav, Kānisāhī, and Damagaṇḍarā in the Nilgiris district and also at Ādipur and Kiching in the Panchpur subdivision of Māyurbhanja state. Among the statues discovered in the ruins of these places, are figures of Mitra in two different postures, one sitting and the other represented standing on seven horses." (Nagendra Nath Vasu, *op. cit.*, p. XVI). There were other sanctuaries at Gwālior Rājasthān, in Kashmir, and in Orissa. Perhaps Iranian influences had something to do with the organisation of this worship. During the middle ages, at any rate, a great array of Indian proper names would by itself show how much this cult was in vogue throughout India. In fact, the Sun has always been in a way the professional and family god of astronomers and astrologers, who rarely fail to invoke him at the commencement of their writings. In our days, there are no Ādityabhaktas or Śauras except in the south, and even there, they are far from numerous. But the Sun has not ceased to fill a large space in the prayers of the Hindus. Very few, Brahmins especially, commence their daily duties without saluting him, with the old salutation now scarcely understood, of the Sāvitrī, and in the imagination of these people, he has remained, as it were, the very symbol of the deity."[91] R. C. Majumdar has assigned three reasons for the continuation of Sun-worship.[92] He says, "Of the vast Vedic pantheon, Sūrya alone formed the god of a particular sect, and many temples were erected for his worship. This seems to be due to three reasons. In the first place** the Gāyatṛi-*mantra*, daily repeated by the Brāhmaṇas, kept alive the memory of the Sun-god. Secondly, the orb of the Sun being daily visible, the idea of his worship could not be dropped altogether. Further, the Magis of Persia brought a cult of the Sun into India about the third century of the Christian era. The two streams mingled and saved the Sun-god from the fate of the other Vedic deities." Similarly, R. C. Hazra maintains that "fortunately, the Magas came forward to remove this long-felt want, [non-provision for the construction of any image or temple] and it was to this contribution of these foreigners that their remarkable success in speedily popularising their faith was due to a very great extent."[93] "There was another cause for the wide popularity of the Magian method of Sun-worship. It was that the Magas allowed great privilege in religious matters to women and members of the lower castes."[94]

Causes of Popularity of Sun-worship

During the times, when the Purāṇas were written many cults and religions vied with one another to gain ascendancy in Hindu society. Buddhism, Jainism and the Brāhmaṇical religion were the main contestants. Buddhism was a powerful reaction against the supremacy of Brahmins as a self-contained caste based on the principle of birth and heredity, the authority of the scriptures and the sacrificial nature of their religion. They wanted to foil the attacks on this religion, and prescribed easy and cheap means to attain the supreme goal. This led to the growth of popular Hinduism represented by the Purāṇas. In the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* we come across many references to the effect that the lighting of an earthen lamp in a temple of the Sun or sweeping temple-floors or the mere offering of flowers there, bestow on the devotee : *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *mokṣa*. The Brahmins perhaps understood that, as in other walks of life, in religion too, people like to choose that path which calls for the least effort, thought or self-abnegation. They would look for the maximum benefit with the minimum of effort. In this way the Brahmins were successful both in weaning people from Buddhism and maintaining their leadership of Hindu society. Moreover, the Sun, a palpable deity, was useful to man is a variety of ways, and it caught the attention of a large number of people. As has been observed previously, kings, guilds, officers, etc., became devout followers of the Sun cult.

Conclusion

As a result of the impact of the Iranians on life in western and northern India, during the centuries following the Christian era, the rule of the Bactrians, Parthians and Scythians, who later passed under the overlordship of the Sassanians, Iranian religion exerted a measure of influence on Indian cults and rituals. The Magas, the priests, the Iranians and the carriers of their religious traditions, settled and became domiciled in various places in India and contributed their peculiar system of Sun-worship and associated beliefs, such as dreams, omens, augury and necromancy and particularly their science of astronomy and astrology to the Indian religion and cultural milieu. In course of time, their admixture with the local people became so pronounced as to necessitate a special body of literature to serve the new class. This literature, which must have been considerable in ancient times, has some dominant characteristics : the emphasis on Sun-worship on the Iranian pattern and its pre-occupation with hells and heavens corresponding to the dichotomy of darkness and light. It was also concerned with omens and dreams and the art of making forecasts. Its outlook on such matters as caste was, however, liberal and catholic. Its trend of forecasting enabled a succession of writers to keep the religion abreast of its times by including subsequent historical developments. It dispensed with the idea of a scripture that sought to be the word and deed of God enshrined once and for all, eternal and canonical, and used the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, less remote from daily life, to keep aspirants within the fold. It became the source and exemplar of the moral life, lived here in regard of a hopeful future, and it desisted from harking back to the unapproachable greatness of a vanished past. This inevitably led to its becoming the basic text for historical prophecies and resulted in the corruption of its text. Thus the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, so called, reflects the circumstances of the Indo-Iranian cultural synthesis—the latter exemplified in the sphere of religious rituals, doctrines and of other associated arts, sciences and the way of life. From this standpoint the study is of engaging interest as the subsequent chapters, it is hoped, will reveal.

NOTES

1. "Darius established two Satrapies in the basin of the Indus beginning from the end of the sixth century B.C. and the annexation of a part of Indian territority of the wish could have taken place in the time of Cyrus. After the destruction of the Persian Empire by Alexander and the short occupation of these Satrapies by the latter, Indian regions continued unbroken. The Iranian people of Upper Asia and of Iran itself, the Sakas. the Parthians and the Kusāṇas conquered vast territories of India several times and stayed here as rulers for long periods. The Sassanids also penetrated into the country or maintained regular relations with the sovereign." From J. Filliozat, *The Classical Doctrines of Indian Medicines*, p. 35.

(ii) We learn from Farishtā that Ardashīr attacked the king Junah, ruling the frontier of India, and extorted gold, jewels, pearls and elephants. *Tārīkh-i-Farishtā*, Urdu Translation by Mohammad Fidā Alī, Vol. I, page 38.

(iii) Shahpūr 1 attacked the frontier province and placed it under Governor Khurasan, *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 1940, pp. 353-58.

(iv) E. Herzfeld (*Paikuli*, Vol. 1, p. 119) states that, under Behram, the Sassanian empire extended to Kāṭhiāwāṛ and Mālwā.

(v) Jarl Charpentier, in his "The Sassanian Conquest of the Indus

Region" has shown that the Sassanids held sway over greater Śakasthan until about 390-400 A.D. when Kāṭhiāwāṛ, Gujrāt and Mālwā were conquered by Candragupta II ; but the lower Indus valley, at least the regions to the west of the river, was probably held by the Sassanids until their downfall in the middle of the seventh century, when the Arabs arrived on the scene as their successors. *Krishnaswami Aiyangar Commemoration Vol., pp. 12-17.*

(vi) There was an Iranian colony in the vicinity of Jūnāgaḍh State. As observed by Campbell, the trade connection between the Persian Gulf and the western Indian seaboard must have led to the settlement from very early times of the Pahlavas in Gujrāt and Kāṭhiāwāṛ. Curiously enough, the Sudarśana lake in Jūnāgaḍh whose construction was ordered by Candragupta was completed by a Yavanarājā, Tusaspa, on behalf of Aśoka. Tusaspa, as his name indicates, must have been an Iranian. The case of the minister, Sviśākha, the son of Kulaia, a Pahlava, who was the governor of Ānarta and Saurāṣṭra in the time of Mahākṣtrapa Rudradāman (150 A.D.), and was personally responsible for stopping the breach in the Sudarśana tank, shows that the Pahlava community wielded considerable influence in Kāṭhiāwāṛ. It is interesting to note further the connection of the officials of Iranian extraction with Kāṭhiāwār even in the Gupta age. Professor Jarl Charpentier of Upsala University has shown that Parṇadatta mentioned in the Girnār inscription (453-56 A.D.) was the Governor of Jūnāgadh in Skandagupta's time. The inscription glorifies the deeds of Parṇadatta and his son Cakrapālita when once again the embankments of the Sudarśana lake gave way. Professor Charpentier advances arguments to prove that Parṇadatta was simply an Indianisation of the Iranian word, Farnadāta. The name of Cakrapālita resembles Cakharapāta. To prove the existence of an ancient Iranian colony in India, Mr. Hodiwala gives a novel explanation of Raghu's conquest of the Parsis (*Raghuvaṁsa*, 4, 61. ff). According to him the conquest in question was of Ānarta and Saurāṣṭra where the Parsi colony in western India was situated." Quoted from Moti Candra, *Geographical and Economic Studies in the Mahābhārata*, ed. 1945, pp. 104-5.

(vii) During the period of Nausherwan, (531-79) we come across the climax of cultural contacts between India and Iran.

2. i. I.J.S. Taraporewala, *The Divine Songs of Zarathustra*.
   ii. H. Humbach, *Die Gāthās des Zarathustra*.
   iii. Darmesteter, *The Gāthās*.
3. J. N. Bannerji, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, ed. 1936, p. 428.
4. A.V. William Jackson, "The Persian Dominions in Northern India down to the Time of Alexander's Invasion," *The Cambridge History of India*, ed. 1955, Vol. I, p. 285.
5. H. Stuart Jones, "Mithraism," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 752.
6. A.S. Geden, "Sun, Moon and Stars (Hindu)," *Encvclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 83.
7. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XXIII, p. 987.
8. F.C. Davar, *Iran and India through the Ages*, p. 8.
9. P. Giles, "The Āryans," *The Cambridge History of India*, ed. 1962, Vol. I, p. 66.
10. A.V. William Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-90.
11. Clement Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilisation*, p. 85.
12. Martin Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writing and Religion of the Parsis*, p.285.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 285.
14. J. N. Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 434.
15. R. B. Whitehead, *Catalogue of Indian Coins in the Panjab Museum*, Vol. I, p. 187.
16. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.139.71b, 72a.

    लवणोदात्परे पारे क्षारोदेन समावृतः ।।
    जंबूद्वीपात्परो यस्माच्छाकद्वीप इतिस्मृतः ।

17. G.E. Gereni, *Researches on Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia*, pp.164-65.
18. S. C. Vidyabhushana identifies it with Sogdiana in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1902, Part I, p. 154. H.C. Ray Chaudhary, however, equates it with Seistan in his *Studies in Indian Antiquity*.
19. *Śākadvīpa Purāṇa*, Vol. III, No. 2, July 1961, pp.285-86.
20. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.139.73a.

    मगाश्च मगगाश्चैव गानणा मंदभास्तथा ।

21. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, VI, 12, 33.
22. *Ibid.*, XX. V. 71-72.
23. *Ibid.*, 119, 21.
24. *Ibid*,, 1.48, 36-37.
25. *Ibid.*, 1.139.73b and 74a.

    मगा ब्राह्मणभूयिष्ठा मगगाः क्षत्रियाः स्मृताः ॥
    वैश्यास्तु गानणा ज्ञेयाः शूद्रास्तेषांगुमंदगाः ।

26. George Dumezil, *L' ideologic Tripartite des Indo-Europeens*, Brussels, 1958.
27. J.H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, ed. 1913, p. 235.
28. R.N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, 1962, p. 75.
29. *Ibid.*, p.200.
30. Percy Sykes, *A History of Persia*, ed. 1951, Vol. I, p. iii.
31. E. Herzfeld, *Zoroaster and His World*, Vol. I, p.124.
32. Will Durant, *The Story of Civilisation*, Vol. I, p.372.
33. R.C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, p. 164.
34. Samuel Johnson, *Oriental Religions and their Relation to Universal Religion*, pp. 398-99.
35. James Hope Moulton. "Magi," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 244.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
37. R.C. Zaehner, *op. cit.*, p. 163. Also see :
    i. E.E. Benveniste, *Les Magas dans l'ancien Iran*, Paris, 1938.
    ii. H.S. Nyberg, *Die Religionen des Alten Iran*, German Translation.
38. Nagendra Nath Vasu, *Archaeological Survey of Mayurbhanja*, p. VI.
39. R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisṇavism, Śaivism and other Minor Religious Systems*, ed. 1928, p. 219.
40. Louis Renou, *Religions of Ancient India*, p. 53.
41. Sudharkar Chattopadhya, *Viśvabharati Annual*, Vol. VII, p.88.
42. D.K. Biswas, "The Maga Ancestry of Varāhamihira," *Indian Historical Quarterly*, No.3, September 1949, Vol. XXV, pp. 175, 177 and 178.

43. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.144.25a.

    मकारो भगवान्देवो भास्करः परिकीर्तितः ।

44. F.C. Davar, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.
45. Will Durant, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 356. "The men wore long beards and hung their hair in curls, or later, covered it with wigs."
46. Buddha Prakash, *Studies in Ancient Indian History and Civilisation*, ed. 1962, pp. 340-41.
47. Clement Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilisation*, ed. 1927, pp. 83-84.
48. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.144.26.

    धूपमाल्यैर्यतक्षापि उपहारैस्तथैव च ।
    भोजयंति सहस्त्रांशुं तेन ते भोजकाः स्मृताः ।।

49. *Ibid.*, 1.140.7-19 ; 1.141,4-10.
50. R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, ed. 1958, p. 97.
51. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.147, 33.

    भर्त्ता पूज्यो यथास्त्रीणां शिष्याणां च यथा गुरुः ।
    भोजकस्तु तथा पूज्यः सौराणां हृदिकात्मजा ।।

52. *Ibid.*, 1.147, 37-38.

    नास्ति वेदात्परं शास्त्रं नास्ति गंगा समा सरित ।
    अश्वमेधसमंपुण्यं नास्ति पुत्रसमंसुखम् ।।
    नास्ति भानुसमो देवो नास्ति मातृसमा गतिः ।
    यथै तानि समस्तानि उत्तमानि यदूत्तम ।
    तथोत्तमो भोजकस्त संप्रोक्तो भास्करण तु ।।

53. *Ibid.*, 1.171. 28a.

    यत्कृतं भोजकानां वै तत्कृतं स्याद्रवेर्नृप।

54. *Ibid.*, 1.141. 9a.

    भोजकास्तान्गणान्प्राहु ब्राह्मणान्दिव्यसंज्ञितान् ।

55. *Ibid.*, 1.144. 7a.

    नागत्वा भोजकत्वं हि मोक्षमामोति कञ्चन ।

56. *Ibid.*, 131, 35a.

    प्रभातायां तुशर्वर्यां पुनः संपूज्य तं नगम् ।
    ब्राह्मणोंभ्यस्ततो दत्तवा भोजकेभ्य दक्षिणाम् ।
    छिन्द्याद्व न स्पतींस्तज्ज्ञैस्तैः कृतस्वास्ति वाचवैः ।।

57. Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* III, (Gupta Inscriptions) p. 217.
58. *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part II, p.308 (footnots).
59. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.42. 5b-8.
60. *Ibid*., 1.142.206-22a.

    सर्ववेदमश्चायं सर्वदेव मयस्तथा ।
    सर्वभूतमयः सांव सर्व लोक यमस्तथा ।।
    मध्येऽस्य संस्थितो ब्रह्मा मूले विष्णुर्महामते ।
    शशांक मौलिन्त्ये तु संस्थितो यदुनंदन ।।

61. Arthur Christensen, *Iran under the Sassanids,* Urdu Translation from the French by Mohammad Iqbal, ed. 1941, p. 186.
62. H. Stuart Jones, "Mithraism", *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 753.
63. D.K. Biswas, "Maga Ancestry of Varāhamihira," *Indian Historical Quarterly*, No.3, Sept. 1949, Vol. 25, No.1, p. 178.
64. Percy Sykes, *A History af Persia*, ed. 1951, Vol. I, p. 110.
65. R.G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit*., pp. 216-17.
66. R.L. Mitra, *Antiquities of Orissa*, Vol. II, p. 47.
67. Arthur Christensen, *op. cit*., 155.
68. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.160.19.
69. Arthur Christensen, *op. cit*., p. 190.
70. James Hope Moulton, "Magi," *Encylopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 243.
71. Moulton, *Early Zorastrianism*, p. 220.
72. Will Durant, *op. cit*., Vol, I, p. 372.
73. *Bhavisya Purāṇa*, 1.171.5b.

    कुर्यान्मगो महाबाहो मुखमावृत्य यत्नतः ।।

74. A. Williams Jackson, "Sun, Moon and Stars (*Iranian*)," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 85.
75. *Ibid*., pp. 86-7. (Ardavān, the last of the Parthians and predecessors of Ardashīr Pāpakān, who founded the Sassanian dynasty in the third century A.D., is represented as consulting, on grave matters, with his wise men and constellation-knowers, (dānakān va axtar-mārān, in the Pahlavi text *Kārnāme-i Artakhshīr-i Pāpakān*, II, 4-5, III, 5-6), ed. Darab Peshotan Sañjana, Bombay,

1896, pp. 10, 11, 15-16), and their knowledge of the position of the stars at the moment enabled them to predict to him future events.

76. McCrinole, *Anhient India as Desribed by Ptolmey*, p. 382.

77. i. E. E. Benveniste, *op. cit*.
    ii. H.S. Nyberg, *op. cit*.

78. *Bhavisya Purana*, 1.117.25b, 26a.

    ललाटफलकाद्वौ तु द्वौ चान्यौ वक्षसस्तथा ।
    चरणाभ्यां तथा द्वौ तु पादाभ्यां द्वौ तथा खग ॥

79. *Ibid*., 1.76 and 18b.

    राजाश्रोषौ च कौ तत्रकौ चकल्माष-पक्षिणौ ॥

80. *Ibid*., (i) 1.124.13b.

    राज्ञस्त्रौषादयश्चान्ये दिग्देवा दिंडिना सह ॥

    ii. 1.130, 52b.

81. R.C. Hazara, *op. cit*., Vol. I, p. 39.

82. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.53.1.

    तत्रारुणो मया पूर्वं सारथ्ये सन्नियोजितः ।
    इंद्रेण माठरो नाम वायुना कल्मषेण तु ॥

83. R.C. Hazra, *op. cit*., Vol. I, p. 45.

84. Arthur Christensen, *op. cit*., pp. 150-51.

85. Clement Huart, *op. cit*., p. 153

86. E. Herzfeld, *op. cit*., Vol. I, p. 123.

87. R.G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit*., p. 217.

88. Nagendar Nath Vasu., *op. cit*., pp. x-xi.

89. *Ibid*., p. xii.

90. George A. Griersan, "Saurapatas, Sauras or Sauryas,', Enclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XI, p. 213.

91. A. S. Geden, "Sun, Moon and Stars," (Hindu) *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 84.

92. A Barth, *Religions of India*, ed. 1932, pp. 256-58.

93. "Evolution of Religio-Philosophic Culture of India," *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. III, p. 33.

** The greatest and the most life-giving of heavenly bodies claimed the fervent homage of the Indo-Iranian people, as seen in the prayer offered to Khurshīd and Meher (Persian equivalent of the Sun), in the Zarathustrian faith, and to Sāvitar (the Sun) in the Gāyatṛī Mantra (*Ṛg-Veda* III, 62, 10,) which is as sacred among the Hindus as the Ahunava Mantra is among the Parsis. F.C. Davar, *op*, *cit*., pp.9-10.

94. R.C. Hazra, *op. cit*., Vol. I, p. 31.

95. *Ibid*., p. 2.

CHAPTER III

RELIGION

Sun-worship

Some aspects of Sun-worship have been dealt with in Chapter II. The Magas of Iran, who came and settled in this country, played some part in popularising this cult as we have seen, and contributed towards its beliefs and doctrines. We know that the worship of this god was prevalent during the Vedic age as well as later. It received a fresh impetus from the coming of the Iranians. We have also seen that the Sun-cult, as represented in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, is a fusion of the Indian and Iranian cults. Here we shall deal with other aspects of Sun-worship with particular reference to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.

The worship of the Sun is natural to the human mind. He bestows warmth and is a symbol of undying energy and wonder for the people. He scatters light everywhere. There are various references to this god in the *Ṛg-Veda*. "He judges the actions and the good and bad deeds of the dead."[1] "At the rising of the Sun individuals march towards their destinies and keep themselves busy in their respective duties."[2] "He is the soul of the movable and immovable world."[3] "He destroys diseases and bad dreams."[4] "Every thing depends upon him."[5] In the ideas quoted above, the solar deity has been assigned powers inherent in and natural to him. The Āryans of the *Ṛg-Vedic* age believed in the forces of Nature like Agni, Varuṇa,, and they assigned them similar powers. The Sun, a huge mass of light and heat and beneficial to the whole creation in a variety of ways, must have elicited their wonder and attention. "The Sun, the source of all light and life in this world, has supernatural powers assigned to him. He is the life of 'all that moveth and standeth'." He is all-seeing, the spy of the world. He rouses men to perform their activities, dispels darkness and gives light. "Sūrya is rising, to pace both worlds, looking down on men, protector of all that travels or stays, beholding right and wrong among men."

(10.133 6) "Sūrya becomes the creator of the world and its governor."[6] Similar ideas have been expressed in the *Atharva Veda* also.[7] "The chief feat of Sūrya is his shining for the world, for gods, and men : he smites away the darkness and triumphs over the powers of darkness and witches ; he prolongs the lives of men and drives away sickness, disease and evil dreams. He is also the divine priest of the gods, and is entreated on his rising to declare men sinless before Mitra and Varuṇa."[8] The variety of powers, associated with the celestial deity, make him worthy of reverence and great importance. "The importance of the Sun-god is shown by the fact that no less than five high gods seem to be solar--Sūrya and Śavitṛi, who represent the quickening power of the luminary, Mitra, whose fame in Iran is but palely reflected in India, where he is conjoined with Varuṇa and eclipsed by Varuṇa's glory; Pushan, the representation of the power of the Sun in its effect on the growth of herds and vegetation; and Viṣṇu, the personification of the swift-moving Sun and as god, destined to become one of the two great gods of India."[9]

The *Ṛg-Veda* contains many epithets of Sūrya. In some stanzas, he is styled as "the beautiful winged, celestial bird, *garutmat*," while, in one verse, he is called "ạ white brilliant steed brought by Uṣas". It is also stated that he moves on a car drawn by one, by many or by seven horses. His rays are his horses whose number is seven.

During the Upaniṣadic age, the worship of Vedic gods and goddesses, together with the sacrifices, rituals and ceremonies that their worship entailed, were relegated to the background. In those days of philosophical discussions on subtle and abstruse topics, the mind of the people went beyond gods and deities, and manifested its dissatisfaction with ceremonial religion, previously held as supreme for the attainment of the highest goal. God, soul and *prakṛt*, their nature, characteristics and relationship, the theory of the law of *karman* and a host of other speculative topics were freely discussed by the people. The efficacy of sacrifices paled into insignificance before the austerities, the path of knowledge and action as preached in the various *Upaniṣads*. The higher philosophy attracted more adherents and in this process, the worship ot certain gods became almost extinct, and the popularity of some other gods also suffered considerably.

In the days of Buddha, the Vedic religion, which had already been overshadowed, was further attacked and ridiculed. Buddha expressed his grave doubts about the existence of any absolute God, and, as a natural corollary, he looked askance at all gods and goddesses whose worship was prevalent in his times. He also spoke vehemently against all sacrifices of the Vedic times. The *Upaniṣads* and the Bhakti cults minimised the Vedic sacrifices. The cumulative effect of his teachings, and that of his followers, was that the ascendancy and religion of the Brahmins received a severe blow. Hence, they devised new ways and means to reform their old religion keeping in view the changed conditions.

They changed the conceptions and forms of all gods by incorporating many new ideas, exotic as well as indigenous. Instead of conceiving all gods in the form of natural phenomena, they began to think of them in anthropomorphic terms, i.e., the old gods, instead of merely representing natural forces, were invested with distinct personalities having resemblances with human prototypes. This resulted in the evolution of the Purāṇic pantheon in course of time. In the case of the Sun-god, he was also invested with a human form and a distinct personality which supplanted his original natural connotation. He was not merely the disc of light rising and setting in the sky ; he was a god with anthropomorphic traits and characteristics, having his own cycle of myths and legends like other gods prominent in the Purāṇas. Regarding the position of Sun-worship in the epics, Hopkins observes as follows : "Āditya alone is the Sun and one of the commonest designations of the Sun-god." "A qualifying 'thousand rayed' or 'ray-wreathed' is used or added to Āditya alone...." "The usual function of the Sun is to drive away darkness and demons (from the gods in the sky as well as on earth). At sun-set he absorbs into himself all the glory of the earth, even the light of flashing swords, and then all evil demons disappear."[10]

The Epic Sun-god in unmistakable terms is a human being with the human form and human characteristics. In the words of Hopkins again, "he drives a monocycle, dragged by seven horses, which grow weary after the day's work". He drinks, goes home, possesses hands, hair, etc., bestows wisdom, makes speeches, acts as a witness, etc. He has a family."[11]

The Purāṇas in general are associated with different sects. In every Purāṇa, one particular god is eulogised and represented as the highest god. In order to magnify his personality into a size larger than life and recruit a large number of followers to his cult, a mythology is woven round him. The followers are then enjoined to cultivate a very intense devotional attitude in relation to the deity. "The belief and practice of all Vaiṣṇavite sects alike is modified monotheism, the worship of the Supreme Being under some such name as Rāma or Vāsudeva. But the monotheism is not perfect. On the one hand, it passes into pantheism ; on the other, it is not completely disengaged from mythology, and in all sects, the consorts and attendants of the deities receive greater respect, even if this respect is theoretically distinguished from adoration. Nearly all sects reject sacrifice and make the basis of salvation emotional namely, devotion to the deities and, as a counterpart to this, the chief characteristic of the deities is loving grace."[12] Such was also the case with the Sun-god. "Tales in Purāṇic fashion begin to appear and the exploits and beneficences of the god (Sun) are circulated to attract devotees. The popularity of the god receives a sudden accession of strength through the infiltration of Persian beliefs and the installation of images soon after."[13] "Most of the *Vāyu* information on the matter (sun worship) merely alludes to the adoration of the god and does not suggest any existence of a cult in honour of the deity......" "The reference to the temple of the Sun-god at Vāyupura, also called Pavanapura, and the four tanks at that place, of which the tank of the Sun (Sūrya-kuṇḍa) was one, suggests that the prevalence of Sun-worship is here implied."[14]

Birth of the Sun-god

"Sūrya is said to be born of Brahman (son of the self-existent)."[15] The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* do not state the same view about the birth of this god. At one place, it is mentioned that the Sun was born from the egg and remained in the egg.[16] At another place, it is stated that Manu created ten sons from his mind.[17] One of them was Dakṣa. His daughter, Aditi, was married with Kāśyapa. Due to the union of Aditi and Kāśyapa, an egg was born. From this egg was hatched the Sun-god of a thousand rays. In this way the birth of the Sun is clothed in mythology. In the *Ādibrahma Purāṇa*, (Chapter 44) a different story is given out of the birth of this god and according to it, sixty daughters were born to Dakṣa. Out of these, Aditi, Diti, Danu, Vinatā, etc., were given to Kāśyapa in marriage. Aditi gave birth to gods, Diti to *daityas*, Danu to *dānavas*, and Vinatā and other daughters to the remaining creation of the world. After some time the *daityas* and *dānavas* began to oppress the gods, and ultimately the latter were defeated. At this Aditi, the mother of the gods, began to worship the Sun. He was pleased and asked her for a boon. Aditi requested him to save his sons from oppression by becoming the brother of gods. Thereupon the Sun entered the womb of Aditi, which led to his birth and thus were the gods much pleased.

The Iranians have a different story about the birth of the Sun or Mithra. "On several monuments the figure of the god is seen emerging from a rock." "The scene is sometimes completed by the addition of a shepherd who witnesses the miraculous birth." "On some monuments, the figure of Mithra is seen half concealed by a tree from which he seems to be emerging, or, again, [from] which he is stripping off its foliage."[18]

His birth either from the rock or from the tree simply means the rising sun. "Mithras, as we saw, was by origin a god of the heavenly light ; and it is possible that his birth from the rock may symbolize either the appearance of the dawn on the mountain-tops or the effulgence of light from the vault of Heaven conceived as a solid dome."[19] This idea about the shepherd or shepherds is associated with pastures, fields and crops which are always in great need of the warmth of the Sun. Human beings depend upon the world of vegetation for their sustenance and the latter on the Sun for their growth. Thus the Sun-god is the lord of the vegetable world. According to the Iranian conception, quoted above, the Sun emerging from the tree reinforces the above-mentioned idea. "Thus spake Ahura Mazdah to the holy Zarathusthra : when I created Mithra, Lord of wide pastures, then, O Spitama, I created him worthy of sacrifice, as worthy of prayers as myself, Ahura Mazdah."[20]

Family of the Sun-god

The genealogy of the Sun-god has been traced in chapters 47 and 79 of the "Brāhma-Parvan" of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. These stories which differ among themselves to some extent and in details are sumarized below.

Saṁjñā, the daughter of Dakṣa, was married to the Sun. Yamunā and Yama were born of their union. Saṁjñā found the brilliance of the Sun intolerable, created another woman from her shadow, advised her to stay with the Sun and never disclose the secret. She herself went to Uttara-kuru, became a mare and started grazing. The Sun, ignorant of this arrangement, treated the shadow or Chāyā as his real wife. Chāyā gave birth to three children—Śani, Tāptī and Sāvarṇī. As blood is thicker than water, Chāyā treated her children dearly, and Saṁjñā's children received only step-motherly treatment.

Once Tāptī and Yamunā entered into a heated altercation. Each of them cursed the other, and as a result, they became rivers. At this Chāyā lost her temper and punished Yama, the brother of Yamunā. The innocent Yama, who was already tired of his step-mother's ill-treatment of him, raised his foot to kick her. This was too much for the latter. She cursed him saying that, as soon as he placed his foot on the ground, insects would eat it up. At this time the Sun happened to be about. The presence of the father emboldened the innocent Yama to declare in a complaining mood, "With me, mother is always unkind and discriminatory". The Sun lectured his wife on the importance of treating all children alike and affectionately. But the guilty Chāyā kept silent. This silence encouraged Yama, and he related the whole truth. The Sun solaced his son and to mitigate the mother's curse, he asked him to place his foot on the ground so that the insects might suck the blood and eat the flesh to surfeit and leave. Being a true father, the Sun-god did not forget either of the children who had fallen out and become rivers. He declared that Yamunā's water would be sacred like that of the Gangā and of Tāptī's, like the Narmadā's. Both the rivers would come to be regarded as washers away of sins. The Sun eventually came to his father-in-law and apprised him of all that had come to pass. Dakṣa stated that, because of his (Sun's) intolerable and intense heat, Saṁjñā had left him but could come back if his body were pared on a lathe. The Sun agreed to undergo this ordeal. Viśvakarman did the needful, and thus the Sun got a beautiful and lovely form. His body was bedaubed with poultices made of red sandal-wood paste and *kanvir* flowers, and the heat relented greatly. The Sun became a horse, went to Uttara-kuru and there met his wife. The wife gave birth to two sons—Aśvinīkumāras, (who later became the physicians of the gods) through her nostrils. Thus four children, Yamunā, Yama and two Aśvinīkumārs were born to Saṁjñā, and Tāptī, Śani and Sāvarṇī to Chāyā.

A Second Version

The Sun had two wives, Saṁjñā and Nikṣūbhā. The latter was the Chāyā of Saṁjñā. Saṁjñā was very beautiful and devoted to her husband. She had three children. She could not tolerate the brilliance of the Sun and went to her father's house, leaving behind Nikṣubhā, the inseparable "shadow" of herself. When her father pressed her to return to her husband, she went to Uttara-kuru and became a mare. Chāyā stayed on with the Sun, and two sons and one daughter were born to her. She, being the step-mother, ill-treated the children of Saṁjñā. Yama felt greatly offended at this and raised his foot to kick his step-mother. She cursed him and said, "Let your foot fall off". Yama went to his father and complained to him. The Sun, moved at his son's intolerable pain, said: "Let insects suck the blood and eat the flesh of your foot and go away. In this way the curse of your mother will be allowed to take effect but your foot will be saved." The Sun then exhorted his wife to be affectionate and treat all his children with equal regard. The Sun found her irresponsive to this call of duty and fair play, became angry and was about to curse her. At this time Viśvakarman arrived, and the true story unfolded itself through the confrontation. He told the Sun: "My daughter found your brilliance unbearable. She left you and went into the jungle. She is practising austerities for making your body charming, graceful and attractive. I have been ordered by Brahmā to make your body perfect and lovable." The Sun agreed to this proposal and his body was turned and fashioned to a new shape on a lathe in Śākadvīpa. Through his yogic powers, the Sun found out that his wife had transformed herself into a mare and was grazing in a meadow in Uttara-kuru. He became a horse, too, went there and sought to celebrate the reunion with intercourse. Saṁjñā could not recognize him and imbibed his generative fluid through her nostrils, and thus two Aśvinīkumāras were born. The Sun assumed his original form, they co-habited again and thus was Raivant born. From this story, we learn that nine children were born to the Sun. Out of these, Manu, Yama and Yamunā were born to Saṁjñā. Manu became the king, Yama the Dharmarāja and Yamunā, the river. The children born to Chāyā were Śrutasrava, Śrutakarma and Tāptī. The first was known as Sāvarṇi Manu, the second, became the Śani *gṛha* and Tāptī became a river which drains into the Arabian sea. The last three children were two Aśvinīkumāras, the physicians of the gods, and Raivant, the keeper of the horses.

These two stories having the same theme, i.e., the family of the Sun, differ in particulars and clearly show that these two chapters were incorporated in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* by two different persons.

Similar stories have been mentioned in the *Ādi-Brāhma Purāṇa*[21] and *Sāṁba Purāṇa*.[22] But the story retailed in the *Matsya Purāṇa*[23] is different from those of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* in many details. Here, the

Sun had three wives, namely, Saṁjñā, Rājñī and Prabhā. Raivat was born to Rājñī, Prabhāta to Prabhā and Manu, Yama and Yamunā to Saṁjñā. Saṁjñā found the brilliance of the Sun intolerable, created another woman out of her shadow, advised her to serve her husband and look after the children. She herself went to her father. The Sun lived with the shadow as his own wife. She gave birth to two sons, Sāvarṇi and Śani and to two daughters, Viṣṭi and Tāptī. She treated her own children affectionately but lacked in warmth towards the children of Saṁjñā. Yama could not bear this and once he raised his foot against her. At this the "Shadow" cursed him and said, "This foot will always remain pustulated and be eaten by insects". The sad Yama approached his father and told the story of the curse. He further told his father that his mother did not appear to be the real one. At this, the father said helplessly, "Well. One has to bear the consequences of one's actions and eat of the fruit thereof. However, I shall give you a cock which will eat the insects and drain the puss off your sore foot." Yama was disappointed at his father's reply. He went to Gokarṇa, practised austerities, pleased the god, Mahādeva. The latter made him the chief judge and sustainer of the world. After some time, the Sun came to know about the real story and related everything to Viśvakarma. The latter told the Sun that, because of his intolerably excessive heat, Saṁjña had left him. She was in Maru country, had been turned to a mare and was grazing in a meadow. If he got his body shaped and pared, he would become attractive and his wife could come back to him. The whole body excepting the feet was so pared. It is an allusive convention by which the Sun's feet are never shown in any representation of him as an idol. And it is believed that a devotee, who worships the idol of the Sun having feet, goes to hell. The Sun after acquiring a beautiful form went to Saṁjñā. In the sexual intercourse that ensued, Saṁjñā regarded him as another person, took his semen through her nostrils and thus two Aśvinīkumāras were born. After some time, Saṁjñā recognised her husband, became much pleased and went to Heaven with him.

In the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and the *Matsya Purāṇa*, we find that nine children were born to Saṁjñā. But in the *Bhaviṣya*, three children were born to the "Shadow," and three to Saṁjñā in Uttara-kuru, but in the *Matsya*, we find that four children were born to the Shadow and two to Saṁjñā in Maru country. There is no mention in the *Matsya* about the quarrel between Yama and Tāptī, and the country where Saṁjañā became a mare is Maru and not Uttara-kuru as mentioned in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇas's* (Chapters 77 and 78) story about the children of the Sun differs in certain respects from that of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. The latter has it that Manu, a boy, was born to the Sun by Saṁjñā. As she shut her eyes when the Sun gazed on her, he became angry and imprecated, "Because you always shut your eyes in my sight, you shall give birth to Yama, the warder (imprisoner) of mankind." At this Saṁjñā became agitated. The Sun had spoken in anger and realizing this, he relented : "Now you have seen me, you shall, therefore, have a daughter, the river Yamunā". Saṁjñā then went to her father's house and left her shadow behind with instructions to serve the Sun. She stayed with her father for some time but had to leave as he would not approve of this arrangement. The Shadow gave birth to two sons and a daughter. Baulked in his need of a mother's love and exasperated that his step-mother had used him ill, Yama raised his foot to kick her. She cursed him ; "This foot of yours shall fester and fall off to the earth." The matter was reported to the Sun who questioned his wife but she was taciturn. The Sun became enraged and got ready to bring down a curse on her. Thereupon the whole story unfolded itself. The Sun went to his father-in-law's house and inquired about his wife. He was informed that, due to his excessive splendour, Saṁjñā had left him. He could meet her if his body became agreeable. Viśvakarman advised him to get his body pared on a lathe. The needful was done and the Sun went to Northern Kuru (Uttara-kuru) to meet his wife. Thinking him to be a stranger, she took his semen into her nostrils and two Aśvinīkumāras were given birth to. Later, another son, Revanta by name, was born to her. The Sun made an end of the curse on his son by saying, "The insects taking flesh from Yama's foot shall fall off to the earth".

All these stories were meant to explain the custom of dressing the legs and feet of the Sun with trousers and boots. In India the gods are not dressed in this manner. As a matter of fact shoes are an anathema to Hindu divinity and to their sense of purity. But when the Sun-god with Iranian features was incorporated into Hindu religious figures, some explanation had to be sought and obtained for covering the legs and feet of this god with leggings and boots. The natural explanation was that this was done to ward off the evil eye from the feet of a god. So it came to be held that the feet of the god were inauspicious and had to be concealed from the view.

The above stories supply the purpose for an iconographic convention.

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* does not regard the two wives as anthrophomorphic and the Sun as a person when it states that Rājñī is the sky and Nikṣubhā is the earth.[24] The sky sends down rain and the earth yields corn and thus sustains the life of the people. In order to heighten the importance of Sun, Manu, the first king, is made his son. Yamunā and Tāptī, two important and sacred rivers, have also been included in the family. The birth of two Aśvinīkumāras is also not without significance. Healing is a power and trait of the Sun, much discussed and invoked. Thus Aśvinīkumāras, the sons of the Sun, become not only the physicians of gods but also the physicians of common people. "The twin gods, the Aśvins, are the divine physicians born out of the union of Sūrya and Saṁjñā who had assumed temporarily the shape of a horse and a mare ; their Vedic counterparts were the Nāsatyas, the Indo-Iranian deties, who are mentioned along with Indra, Mitra, and Varuṇa in the Boghaz-köi inscriptions. Their images are rarely described in the texts. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* "(Brāhma Parvan," Chapter 124, verse 20) while describing the figures of various attendants of the Sun-god, says that the Aśvins should be placed on either side of Sūrya and as they were born out of the union of Sun and his wife assuming the form of a horse and mare respectively, they are called Aśvins."[25] In the Sūrya statue from Sikar, they are shown to be standing on both the sides of the main deity. In the colossal statue of the Sun from Varmana (Sirohi), the standing Aśvins appear as attendants on either side of Sūrya. Raivant was appointed the keeper of the horses owing to the fact that Sun's horse-drawn chariot needed a person to look after them. Yama, one of his sons, is raised to the position of Dharmarāja, the protector of the people and the lord of the *pitṛs*. Thus we find that the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, faithfully following the traditional device of inter-weaving human traits and supernatural myths, tried to popularise the Sūrya cult and to make him supreme in the eyes of the people.

Eulogy of Sun-god

A large number of passages scattered here and there in many chapters of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* have so exalted and extolled his qualities that he becomes the highest god. In order to fulfill the aspirations of the people for whom this cult was meant, the god is made more human, more philosophical and more mythological. It has been rightly observed that " the worship of later deities mentioned in many Purāṇas is generally sectarian and often emotional. The devotee selects one for his adoration and this selected deity becomes not merely a great god among others, but a gigantic cosmological figure in whom centre the philosophy, poetry and passions of the devotee. He is god almost in the European sense."[26]

Brahmā says to Yājñavalkya, "The god who dispels the darkness of the whole world, gives light to the three worlds, is eternal, indestructible, omnipresent, god of all gods, foundation of the whole world and preserver and destroyer of the world. He is the light of all. None can equal him in excellence and eminence."[27] Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are given subordinate positions and allotted duties of creation, preservation and destruction respectively by the grace of Sūrya. They are seen worshipping this god and depend on him for the rights and privileges enjoyed by them. A similar eulogy of the Sun is cited in a book on Zoroastrianism.

Hail Khorshed (Sun) Lord of Sky,
Radiant, horse-speeded, raised on high,
Offspring of Ormuz, thou first born,
We greet thee, this auspicious morn !
Thy brilliance stirs the earth the while
Ten thousand angels rise and smile ;
Bathed in thy healing rays, how now
To thee all pious people bow !
And when spring time is nigh, in poise.
Even trees and birds and beasts rejoice !
The lands with their own verdant leaves,
The saline water of the seas,
The running rivers and the brooks,
The standstill lakes of glory looks,
They are refreshed and sanctified,
And joy and hope extend worldwide.
But what a change when thou art gone,
When dark hours strike from dusk to dawn.
Thy heat and light waves fight the foe—
That on the lap of night repose,
As deadly germs of diverse harm
And Painikas and Divs alarm.
O Fire of Fires ! O Light of Lights !
Thine are but grand etheral flights ;

Within ourselves stay on some time,
That we may live a life sublime"[28].

The cosmic form of the Sun given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* bears ample testimony to the fact that this cosmic god, like that found in the *Gītā*, had attained considerable importance by then.[29] : The authors of this Purāṇa, however, thought it fit and advisable to bring their sectarian teachings in line with those of other cults and borrowed ideas from other sources. "Concentrate your mind on me [Sun]. Worship me with devotion, think that I am present everywhere. You will be redeemed from all the sins and attain salvation."[30]

In the the same way, the *Sāṁba Purāṇa* begins with a salutation to the Sun. There he is posited as the cause of creation, protection and destruction of the world and is the soul of the Pitāmahaḥ, Nārāyaṇa and Śaṁkara, whose manifestation are three Vedas and who pervade the Universe in the form of Sakra, Vahni, Yama, Varuṇa, Samīrana (Vāyu), Dhanada and others who crowd the quarters. In the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta I (415-], Bandhuvarman [473-74 A.D.] the Sun has been praised in high terms. It says : 'Perfection has been attained ! May that Sun protect you—who is worshipped by the hosts of gods for the sake of existence, and by the *Siddhas* who wish for supernatural powers [and] by ascetics, entirely given over to abstract meditation [and] having wordly attraction well under control, who wish for the final liberation of the soul, and with devotion, by saints, practising strict penances, [who wish to become] able to counteract curses ; and who is the cause of the destruction and the commencing [again] of the Universe ! Reverence to the Sun,—whom [even] the Brahminical sages, though they have the knowledge of truth [and have] exerted themselves, failed to comprehend ; and who worships the whole of the Universe with [his] rays dispersed in all directions. Who, when he is risen, is praised by *Gandharvas*, gods, *Siddhas*, *Kinaras*, *Naras*, [who] with gracious beams, protected you—who shines day after day, with the mass of [his rays] flowing down over the wide and lofty summit of the lordly mountain of the dawn, [and] who is a dark-red colour like the cheeks of introxicated women !"...(Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp.84-5.)

Similarly in the Gwalior stone inscription of Mihiragula (*Ibid.*, pp, 163-64) invokes the Sun, "May he [the sun] protect you, who is victorious—dispelling the darkness of the banks of the clouds with the masses of the multitudes of his rays that light up the sky, [and] decorating the tops of the sides of the mountain if dawn with [his] horses, which have the tossing ends of [their] manes dishevelled through the fatigue [induced] by [their] startled gait ;—[and] who,--having [his] chariot-wheel [?] swallowed [?]..the mountain of dawn, dispelling distress (being) the light of the house which is the world ; [and] afflicting—the destruction of the night,—creates the fresh beauty of the water lilies by [his] rays which are the colour of molten gold." D.C. Sirkar, (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXX, p. 45) has found two stone inscriptions which contain an eulogy of the Sun-god as Bhīlsā which was once the famous seat of the Sun-god Bhailla or *Bhailesvamīni*. The importance of these inscriptions (*Ibid*., p. 218) lies in the mention of the poet Chittapa, who enjoyed the title Mahākavichakra Vastmi; as the author of the *Khaṇḍa Kāvya* in praise of the Sun-god.

In the *Ādibrahama Purāṇa* (Chapter 29) the Sun has been stated as the highest god. He creates, sustains and destroys the world. All the gods, *ṛṣis*, men, *gandharvas*, etc., worship him. People of the four *āśramas* are devoted to him and get all the desired fruits of this world and of the next world from him. He is the soul of all. He is the father, mother and *guru* of the whole world. Famous kings like Janaka and *ṛsis* like Vyāsa have reached the abode of the Sun. In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* (English, Chapter 78) the Sun has been eulogised in high terms. It is declared categorically that the Sun is the universal cause, the illuminator, the maker of night, twilight and moonlight. With the touch of his rays, life comes to this earth ; water and other objects are cleaned. "Thou verily art Brahmā's form ; the highest and the lowest also ! Moreover thou art material and non-material ; thou art minute and yet thou does exist in massive shape ! Thou hast the form of time, composed of moments, *kṣaṇās* and other divisions of time, yet subject to decay !" In the same way it is stated in Chapter 102, (pp. 20-21) that the adorable Sun, whose self is the Veda, who abides in the Veda, whose self is Veda knowledge, is called the supreme soul. And he, the eternal, who is the cause of creation, permanence and dissolution, on taking recourse to passion, goodness and the other qualities, acquires the names of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and other gods. A similar eulogy of the Sun is also found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.[31] It is stated there that "the Sovereign Sun, Oh Brahman, the cause of day and night, perpetually revolves, affording delight to the gods, to the progenitors and to mankind. Cherished by the *suṣumna* rays of the Sun, the moon is fed to the full in the fortnight of its growth , and in the fortnight of its wane, the ambrosia of its substance is perpetually drunk by the immortals, until the last day of the half month, when the two remaining digits are drunk by the progenitors ; hence these two orders of beings are nourished by the Sun. The moisture of the earth, which the Sun attracts by his rays, he again parts with for fertilization of the grain, and the nutriment of all terrestrial creatures ; and consequently, the Sun is the source of subsistence to every class of living things, to gods, progenitors, mankind and the rest. The Sun, Maitreya, satisfies the wants of the gods for a fortnight [at a time] ; those of the progenitors once a month ; and those of men and other animals daily."

Similar ideas are also found in the Iranian religion. Mithra is praised in almost identical terms. He is invested with similar qualities and capacities. *E. Herzfeld* in his *Zoroaster and His World*, Vol. II, pp. 472-73, has translated some eulogies of Mithra, which can be fruitfully compared with the verses addressed to the Sun, in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, quoted above. However, there seems to be some differences in the characters of the two gods. Whereas in Iran much emphasis was laid on the authoritative aspects of Mithra, in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, his creative function has been stressed. In Iran, Mithra became the prototype of an earthly despot, but in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, the Sun was a cosmic force, almost philosophical in conception. Though in the Persian language, Mihr (derived from Mithra) means love or friendship, yet his methods of correcting the wicked are violent, cruel and arbitrary. They do not harmonise with his own nature. He is said to be the god of war..."... he is also a god of war whose treatment of his enemies, in its savagery, recalls the wanton cruelty attributed by Zoroaster to the followers of the lie. The principal agent of his vengeance is Verethraghna who furiously pursues his perfidious enemies in the form of a raging boar."

"We worship Mithra of wide pastures in front of whose speeds Verethraghna, Ahura-created—in the form of a boar, aggressive, sharp in tooth, a male, a boar, sharp in tusk, unapproachable, a killer at one blow—furious, slobbering at the snout, the mighty iron its forefeet, iron on its hind feet, iron its tendons, iron its tail, and iron its jaws. Filled with rays and a hero's valour, he catches up with his enemies and violently [?] smites them down, nor does he deem that he has dealt them a blow or inflicted a wound until he has smashed the vertebrae, the pillars of life—the vertebrae, the spring of vitality. At one blow he hacks to pieces everything in bones and hair, brains and blood of men who break their contracts he smashes them together on the ground."[31]

This difference in outlook and emphasis may be ascribed to the growth of two types of thought-complexes in these two countries. In Iran, the drift was towards a materialistic standpoint ; in India, the approach was philosophical.

Offerings to the Sun-god

One of the popular methods of pleasing the Sun, as is the case with the other gods, is to make offerings to him. The usual offerings are flowers, fruits, corn, milk, ghee, *dhūpa*, incense, etc. But of special significance are things of red colour like red sandalwood, *kāravīr* flowers, cakes made of *gur*, *dhūpa*, etc.[33] We come across similar ideas expressed in the *Ādibrahma Purāṇa*. In various passages of this Purāṇa[34] it is laid down that offerings of an earthen lamp, sandalwood, red flowers, etc., to the Sun bestow on the devotee many rewards. Even mere salutation is not without its fruits. "All the physical, mental and moral sins of an individual are washed away at the salutation of the Sun."[35] "People who salute the Sun with bowed heads wash their sins immediately."[36] These red objects are said to have cured the Sun and relieved his suffering. Among the Sun-worshipping Slavs of the Kiev regions in Russia, cakes of red colour were offered to the Sun. The *Garuda Purāṇa* devotes three chapters to the salutation of the Sun. Here is a passage from chapter VII : "O bull-emblemed deity, one should adore the Sun and other planets by offering them seats, conveyances, water for washing the feet, *arghya*, water for rinsing the mouth, water for bathing, raiments, sacrificial threads, scents, flowers, incense, lamps, and salutation by circumambulating them and performing the ceremony of *visarjjana* (the withdrawal of life)."[37]

Offerings to the Sun were also made in Iran. "To the Sun, to Fire, to Ahura Mazdah, sacrifice was offered of flowers, bread, fruit, perfumes, sheep, camels, horses, asses and stags. Anciently as elsewhere, human victims had been offered too."[38] The sacrifice of a bull was a very common feature. It was killed in a certain way. "Mithra subdued the savage beast and dragged it into his cave by the hind legs and then stabbed it in the heart with a broad dagger ; he did this at the bidding of the Sun, which was conveyed to him by the Raven."[39] But the practice of human and animal offerings was abandoned by the Magas in India. But in some parts of South India, this practice persists but the objective has been modified. "By the Dravidians and Kolarians the Sun is widely invoked as Parmeśvara, the creator and preserver and is worshipped with prayers and sacrifices. The most popular form of offering is a white cock, whose head is struck off at the village shrine."[40]

BRAHMĀ-WORSHIP

Introduction

Brahmā is the first member of the Hindu trinity charged generally with the duty of the creation of the world. Vedic Literature, epics and *smṛtis* also allot him this duty. His more concrete form is found in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.* He is described there as the first of gods who is the creator and preserver of the Universe. In the earlier part of epic literature, he is known as creator, preserver and destroyer of the world. "He created death [above], that the world might be preserved, but he is also known as the god, 'whose anger burned the world' (12,257,16)......... 'Surely,' cries Mātali, 'this must be the destruction of the world which is caused by Brāhman'."[41] "He is at once creator, preserver and destroyer, combining in himself, in the earlier epic, the functions later appropriated by other gods."[42] The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions that he creates, sustains and dissolves the world.[43] It appears that, during the time of his supremacy, he had all these three duties. But at a later stage, the duties of preservation and dissolution of the world were taken away from him. In the struggle, among the Brāhmins to elevate their respective gods, every effort was made to present the sectarian gods as the highest deities with unlimited powers. In this atmosphere Brahmā's position suffered considerably. His two functions of preservation and destruction of the world had to be ceded to Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively. This process started in the later part of the epic. "The view that Brahmā was the Ādi-deva or original god, is modified only in the later epic by his superiority being set aside in favour of Viṣṇu or Śiva with one exception."[44]

Powers and Worship

He has vast powers to bestow happiness on his devotees. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* devotes a large number of stanzas in eulogizing this god. "The rewards gained by his worship are many timemore than the rewards gained by austerities, donations and *yajñas.*"[45] "There is no god like Brahmā and no teacher."[46] Every Veda is said to have sprung from his head. As Vedas are the reservoir of learning and wisdom, so Brahmā is regarded as the god of wisdom. Intellectuals are particularly devoted to him. His wife, Sarasvati, is called the goddess of learning and is worshipped as such.

"...there was a Brahmā cult. Otherwise Varāhamihira (cf pt. i Chap. IX, Installation would not have given equal injunctions for the installation of the images of Brahmā by only those who were well versed in the Vedas."[47] This is also stated in various stanzas of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. "A person, who builds a temple for Brahmā, goes to heaven and enjoys all pleasures at that place."[48] The author of this Purāṇa extols the rewards of the worship of Brahmā to a great extent by stating that "a person, who even having evil motives, sweeps the temple of Brahmā gets the desired fruits."[49]

Causes of the Decline of Brahmā's Position

Various causes for the decline of the power and position of this god are listed below :

1. Brahmā does not correspond to any particular phenomena of nature like fire, sun, etc. In the great struggle among various gods for supremacy at the cost of others, started by Brāhmaṇas, Brahmā did not count for much as he was not the representative of any natural force. The Vedic gods represented different powers of nature and as such they commanded respect and worship. The god Brahmā did not belong to this categtroy, and he therefore, lost greatly in the struggle for supremacy.

2. Though, perhaps, originally representing some magic conception, Brahmā, in course of time, became abstract, abstruse and speculative in character, particularly through philosophical treatises like the *Upaniṣads*. This resulted in the loss of the personal traits in his character. "He had his origin and basis in speculation rather in popular cult, and, therefore, he did not appeal, in spite of his sublime character, to the religious feelings of the masses. Hence the worship of Brahmā has become all but extinct."[50]

Brahmā was known to be self-created. This indirectly underscored his supreme position. But in that war among gods fought by proxy, this quality was taken away from him. "Though called *Svayambhū* (self-created), he was now conceived to have sprung out of the egg, or of the lotus grown in the navel of Viṣṇu, and saved by the latter from destruction at the hands of the demon Madhu."[51] But the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* do not give him a secondary position in the matter of his birth. It is stated that "after the dissolution of the world, Brahmā was born".[52] As the Viṣṇu cult was currently being canvassed by a large number of devotees, so the myth that Brahmā grew out of the navel of Viṣṇu is both a declaration and an indication of the decline in greatness he had suffered.

3. The idea of his incestuous relations with his daughter based on a primary and fundamental philosophical proposition eventually became revolting to the conscience of the people. The *Matsya*, *Bhāgavata* and *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇas* also propagated this myth, and thus Brahmā's position was undermined. This legend helped in transferring allegiance from Brahmā to other gods and was perhaps the greatest single factor in lowering his divine stature in the eyes of his devotees.

4. His somewhat indifferent treatment and equal attachment for gods and demons expatiated on in the Purāṇas seem to have been viewed with considerable disfavour by the latter Purāṇic religons. His activities and impartiality were the cause of a fundamental weakness of character. He is the god of asceticism. He is the father of gods and demons. To win his favour, god and demons practise austerities.Being an impartial father he evenhandedly grants invulnerability, etc., to both gods and demons without favour. As the demons always take advantage of his weakness, so Brahmā is ever engaged in preserving the world from his folly. He is said to have conferred immortality on wicked demons like Rāvaṇa, Hiraṇya and several others. It appears that the discriminatory powers, so vital for a god who can confer untold boons, were absent in Brahmā. When people found that Brahmā confers his favours on undesirables without discrimination, he came to be looked on with disfavour. The distinguishing characteristics of Brahmā thus became the causes of his decline.

The cumulative effect of all these factors led to the decline in his popularity as shown in the relatively smaller number of temples consecrated to his worship. The only ones known and extant are Dudahi and Khajuraho, Vasantgarh, Unkal and Kheo, Brahmi dedicated to Brahmān Pushkar at Rajasthan and Viśva Brahmā temple at Alampur.

GAṆEŚA-WORSHIP

Introduction

Gaṇeśa is an important god of the Hindus. Temples dedicated to him all over India and abroad prove beyond doubt that this god commands a good following. He has an elephant head, is pot-bellied and rides a special species of rat. His form and vehicle may be a matter of ridicule for some, but he is the god of a large number of Hindus. He is worshipped to this day.

His Origin

His name first appears in the *Ṛg-veda* (ii, 23,1) where Bṛhaspati is given the title of Gaṇapati (*Gaṇānāmitvā Gaṇapatiṁ Havāma*). In the *Taittiriya-Araṇyaka* (x. 1,5), we come across a god who possesses a twisted trunk and is known as Daṁtin (the one having a tusk). References to Gaṇeśa are also found in the *Aitareya Brahmaṇa* (1,21). Various scholars agree that the origin of Gaṇeśa is humble. "Meyer affirms that it was a spirit of the fecundity and of the *dead* connection with the 'mothers'; Grierson and Crooke believe in a solar hero of Dravidian origin. Coomaruswamy supposes that Gaṇeśa was a *yakṣa*, one of the semi-gods attending on Kubera, but we do not find any of his names in the Yakṣa lists, according to Miss Getty." "Professor Foucher thinks of an elephant-spirit of the jungle with a therianthropic evolution."[53] "Yet we must not forget that originally Gaṇeśa was a kind of demon, or, to put it more politely, a jungle genius. That he should become included in the retinue of the Great Lord who, followed by innumerable spirits more or less malignant, was belived to haunt the mountains and forests, was an easy step, and one that seemed natural for him to take, since it is written that 'while Viṣṇu is the God of the gods, Śiva is the God of the demons, to rise in rank until he became commander of those hordes and thus to enter the inner circle of the cortege of Śiva was a justifiable promotion, whether due to seniority or to choice".[54] The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* has a different story to tell about the origin of this god. It states, "In olden days all the jobs of the people were done without any difficulty. This meant that people could remove their difficulties themselves. In this way they became proud. Therefore, the Creator created Gaṇeśa to remove the troubles of the people. The idea was that the difficulties of the people would not be removable by themselver but would be removed only through the good offices of Gaṇeśa, who was to be propitiated by adequate worship."

The former view represents Gaṇeśa as a god of demons, a pre-Āryan god. The latter view treats him as a full-fledged Hindu god, who removes obstacles and bestows success. It appears that Gaṇeśa was accepted as an Āryan god when the latter had completely overawed the primitive people, and the living together of the two had started a process of give-and-take in the cultural field. After the Āryanisation of this god, he is said to have been born from Śiva, who had already attained considerable prestige among the Àryans.

Powers and Qualities

Many writers agree that the chief duty of this god is to remove obstacles from the path of human beings. Whether a certain undertaking is fulfilled and comes up against obstacles is in the hands of this god to determine. He can favour or frown upon an enterprise as he wishes. He is the 'king of obstacles,' 'destroyer of obstacles' and 'bestower of success'. "The god with the elephants' head, who clears away obstructions, and inspires prudent resolutions, whom every Hindu, however, invokes before undertaking anything, and who, in his character of patron of letters and arts, is mentioned at the beginning of almost all books".[55] In the *Varāha Purāṇa*, Śiva said to him after he was born : "Thou shall be the chief of Vināyakas and Gaṇas and success and disappointment shall spring from thee. Thine influence shall be very great. On all occasions you will be the first god to be invoked, A person, who fails to worship you before undertaking any job, cannot aspire to fulfil his objectives." Similarly there are various passages in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* stating the extraordinary powers which this god can bestow on his devotees.

iv. *Signs of Gaṇesa's Anger*

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions many signs signifying the indignation of this god.[56] "When a person takes bath in oil in dreams, observes naked people, is sad without any reason, finds that somebody follows him, the king does not get his kingdom, teachers do not teach and the pupils do not learn, agriculture is not successful, trade fails etc.," Gaṇeśa's displeasure is unmistakably signified. Similar signs have been stated in *Mānavagṛhyasūtra*, (2.14) "when possessed by the [Vināyakas] a person pounds sods of earth, cuts grass and writes on his body, and sees in dreams water, men with shaved heads, camels, pigs and asses, etc., and feels he is moving in the air, and when walking, sees somedody pursuing him from behind. Again, when possessed by these, princes do not obtain the kingdoms, though qualified to govern, girls do not obtain bridegrooms, though possessed of the necessary qualities, women do not get children, even if otherwise qualified. The children of other women die. A learned teacher qualified to teach does not obtain pupils and there are many interruptions and breaks in the course of a student. Trade and agriculture are also not successful."[57]

The usual ways of pleasing Gaṇeśa are through baths, offerings, food, flowers, etc. Brahmins should be fed and given donations in the form of cash and on kind at the time of the worship of this god.

Hell and Heaven

The theories of rewards and punishments in heaven and hell respectively, enunciated by the Hindus as if the rewards and punishments in this world were not sufficient, have greatly moulded their lives, thoughts and actions. The belief in the existence of life after death has been the sheet-anchor of Hindu thought. Such a belief has facilitated the propagation of the ideas of hell and heaven. It is quite true that references to these ideas are found in Vedic literature but the epics and Purāṇas have played a prominent part in popularising the pleasures of heaven and the pains of hell. They have had a powerful psychological appeal for the masses of people. The Purāṇas, which were meant for the laity, took such ideas to every Hindu home and, therefore, we find the repulsion for hell and attraction for heaven in the minds of a majority of the Hindus, and an uncritical disposition to favour actions to secure the one and shun the other.

HELL

Definition and Conception

The word *naraka* is derived in *Nirukta* in two ways : *ni+araka*, meaning 'going below' (the earth) or *na+ra+ka* 'where there is not the smallest place of joy'. In another place, while describing the *putra* (meaning son), the *Nirukta* (ii. 11) declares that the son is called *putra* because he saves (the father) from the hell called *put*. According to Gautama, *naraka* is a particular place where a man has to dwell in distress and sorrow. The idea, that *naraka* is a place of distress and suffering and lies below the earth, has been accepted by many writers. The word *naraka* is not found in the *Ṛg-veda* though the idea is there. The sage prays to Viśva-devas, "Save me from the pit, from falling down into it".[58] In another stanza the poet calls upon Indra and Soma to throw down the evil-doers into the dark deeps below.[59] The belief that people disliked by Soma and disobeying his orders are thrown into a pit is a variation on the same idea.[60] These passages provide us with an idea that *naraka* is a place below the earth, is a pit and is, to nit, dark and deep. These are meant to impress on the wicked and the sinning a sense of awe and dread. As noted before the, *Ṛg-veda* does not mention anything of the horrors of *naraka.* Beginning from the *Atharva-veda* up to the time of the Purāṇas, the ideas of hell became prominent. The agonising conditions of the road leading to the abode of Yama, his personality, his various emissaries, different *narakas* meant for different kinds of sinners and the most pathetic and horrible picture of the sinners—all these things have been narrated in a most detailed manner by various writers. In the *Atharva-veda*, it is stated that those who spit on the face of a Brahmin, or who exact money from him, have their hair pulled in the midst of a river of blood.[61] In the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* (11.6.1.4) we come across the torments of hell : men cutting up the limbs of others one by one for crimes committed. The epics and Purāṇas have tried their best to popularize the ideas of hell and the conditions therein.

Number of Hells

Authors do not agree as to the number of different hells. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* (Chapter 101) mentions 27 ; the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (Chapter 6. pt. ii) 26 ; the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* (Chapter 57) 26 ; the *Ādibrahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* (Chapter 24) 21 and (Chapter 100) 22 hells. Manu (iv. 88-90), Yājñavalkya (iii. 222-224), *Viṣṇu* (43.21-22) and the *Agni Purāṇa* (371.20-22) enumerate 21 *narakas*. There is some difference with regard to the names and order of hells in the different *Purāṇas*. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, however does not mention the number of hells.

The Path Leading to the Abode of Yama

Sinners and evil-doers must taste the bitter fruit of their past sins as soon as they walk on the road leading to the residence of Yama. A very graphic description of this path full of pains, agonies and tortures has been presented in the *Bhaviṣya Puraṇa* (iv. 6.23-58). A similar story is related in other Purāṇas as well. This path is full of thorns, needles, stones, snakes, venomous insects, beasts and similar poisonous animals. There is neither shade nor water. The messengers of Yama drag the sinners along this path mercilessly. They are beaten cruelly. They are friendless, hopeless and helpless. None comes to their aid. The lips and throats of the sinners become dry. They weep and cry, but it has no effect on the messengers of the god. "All go to Yama over a dreadful road, on which the pious fare better than the wicked."[61] The sinners are scolded with severe and unkind words. They are pounced upon by vultures and pierced by sharp weapons. They pray for mercy from the merciless and cruel *dūtas* and recall events from their past. But it is no use crying over spilt milk. All sorts of pains are inflicted on their bodies. We come across similar ideas in the *Avesta* also.

"After death, the soul hovered near the body for three days and nights if righteous, assisted by Srösh against demons; but if evil, tormented by evil angels. Then, according to its condition, it started for the other world with an escort of good or evil beings. Now the Chīnvat bridge was reached. Here the righteous met a beautiful virgin—the sum of his good deeds—who conducted him to Paradise, where he was introduced to Ahura, welcomed by Vohumano, and given heavenly raiment and a golden throne, and (according to later beliefs) the wicked met an ugly hag—embodying his evil deeds—who led him to hell, 'the obscure world".[63] "It is as a dense jungle, but no tree give shade, as one goes to it. There is no water to drink, no place to rest ..." There is a river called Puṣpodak, which is as pus to those who have done ill, but sweet water to those who have in life given water to others".[64]

Description of Yama

The duties and functions of Yama have undergone considerable change since the time of the *Ṛg-veda*. He is an Indo-Iranian deity and is praised in the *Ṛg-veda*. The *Ṛg-veda* (x.14.1) calls him a king and his duty is to gather people together. He is the first person to reach heaven. He has two dogs. They are his spies and move among men and mark their deeds. In the *Ṛg-veda* (x.165.4.) Yama is identified with *mṛtyu* (death) or the owl (an evil omen). A *kapota* is said to be the *dūta* of the god. In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, Mṛtyu is credited with having fetters and wooden maces for erring men.[65] Thus we find that dread, fear and horror are gradually associated with the person of Yama. The two dogs acting as the spies of the god and the idea of Mṛtyu produce fear in the minds of people. "Thus, though in the *Ṛg-veda*, Yama is a god and mostly a beneficent ruler of men, there is an element of fear associated with him as the two prying dogs, that guard the way to heaven, and his being called Mṛtyu, would suggest".[66] The two dogs with Yama have their counterparts in Iranian Mythology. "According to the *Ṛg-veda* (x.14.11) Yama in the next world is accompanied by two dogs;

according to the *Vendidād* xiii.9 and Bundehishn, (supplementary chap. Ist. verse) the Chīnvat Bridge at the frontiers of the celestial world is guarded by spiritual dogs".[67] The Epics and the Purāṇas popularise the idea of Yama and allot him the duty of punishing evil-doers. He is the chief of the hells and sends the sinners to different hells for their bad deeds. His personality is described in a graphic, moving, dreadful and awe-inspiring way in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.* It mentions that Yama, with his long and horrible moustaches and beard, lips trembling with anger, a dreadful face, bedecked with a garland of red flowers, an incarnation of fear, appears to engulf the whole world.[68] Beside him are seated various emissaries with their horrifying gestures and strange looks. All the diseases are also present in strength. Different kinds of sharp weapons lie ready to hand which are pressed into service at his command. Citragupta, the chief of the Yama's staff, knows the (sin-and-merit) account of all the individuals. The sinners witness this horrible scene and tremble from top to toe.

After passing through the dreadful road to hell the sinners are presented before Yama. The fearful personality of this god is enough two awe them into submission.

Torments in Hell

Story of torments in hell, is painted in an agonising and dreadful way by many Purāṇas. The god, Yama, presses into service all deadly beasts, poisonous insects and cruel birds to punish the evil-doers. The sinners are boiled in oil and compelled to embrace red-hot iron pillars. Nails are driven into their bodies, their parts are cut and dried, and other innumerable and untold pains are inflicted on them. Water and food are denied them. They are sometimes thrown into a pit of pus and urine. They have to live amidst terrible darkness. In their journeys, they have to pass through unclean and filthy surroundings. They are hit with arrows and hacked into pieces. They are mercilessly dragged, beaten, and punished. If they cry out for aid or seek for mercy, they receive a further thrashing. They are thrown down from high mountains and rolled on hot sand. The emissaries of Yama are never tired of inflicting pains on the damned. There are different punishments for each kind of sin and one for each part of the body. The part by which a person commits a sin is cut, separated, boiled, powdered, or, fed to insects. Again we come across parallel ideas in Iranian epics too. " In it there is neither pleasure nor joy, all is stench and pollution, pain and punishment, affliction, suffering, misery and discomfort —all this, too, to an infinite degree so that there can be no comparison with earthly pains and whereas, on earth, the fear of some future evil is usually worse than the evil itself, in hell the reality far exceeds the dread."[69]

But the irony of fate is that the sinners do not die. They cannot.

HEAVEN

Heaven is the seat of all happiness. Śabara maintains that, by heaven, we mean joy itself and not the object which is the source of joy. This definition shows a state of mind in which one experiences joy or happiness. The general idea of the Purāṇas is that Heaven is a place situated above the earth where every individual enjoys the fruits of the good deeds. But it is not a permanent abode. The individual returns to the earth after the consequences of his good actions have given over. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* maintains that heaven is a place of enjoyment and the earth a place of action.

Conception of Heaven

The *Ṛg.-veda* has a clear reference to heaven. It states that a devotee or a donor goes to heaven and enjoys the company of goods.[70] He implores the gods to grant immortality to the worshippers. Another stanza promises all manner of happiness is to those bound for heaven, and that the desires of the residents would be fulfilled.[71] From the study of various passages of the *Taittiriya Saṁitā* (vi.6.9.2), the *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa* (1.5.2 5-6) the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* (xi.1.8.6.), P.V. Kane[72] concludes that "these passages are enough to establish that the state of the pious after death and of heroes killed in battle was one of happiness in heaven, that there the food and material things (such as honey, ghee), that a person needs in this world are also available in greater perfection and abundance."

Pleasures in Heaven

As hell is full of different kinds of pains and afflictions, so is heaven full of different kinds of pleasures and happiness. Sensual and physical pleasures are available in abundance. Beautified gardens, perfumed flowers, the company of gods and the service of damsels are only a few among the amenities of Heaven. The *Brāhma Purāṇa*[73] lays down that the generous donors go to heaven where they enjoy the best pleasures in the company of *apsaras*. They stay there in the heavenly garden called the Nandana. When they fall from heaven, they are re-born in rich and noble families. The *Mahābhārata* ("Vanaparvan," 186.607); the *Mastya Purāṇa* (276.17) contain similar descriptions of heaven. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* promises at various places, that all desires, which generally remain unfulfilled in this world, are fulfilled in heaven. Beauty, progeny, good fortune, health, long life, dance, and delicacy, beautiful places, etc. are available in plenty in heaven.

Heaven has been conceived of as a place of pleasures. It is a place above the earth. The Purāṇas, which spread the ideas of hell and heaven and which have attained the position of the fifth Veda or the 'Veda of the laity', were never subjected to intellectual analysis. Such attempts, during the days of Brahminical supremacy and intense religious fervour might have been regarded as heretical. These ideas travelled without encountering opposition and gained much currency. Hell and heaven have since then become part and parcel of the daily life of the Hindus.

Conclusion

1. The Sun-god is all prominent and a major part of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* has a close bearing on the cult bearing his name.
2. Besides the Sun-god, Brahmā and Gaṇeśa are also given a measure of prominence.
3. Śiva and Viṣṇu are not only adverted to en *passant* but frequently.
4. Other gods are excluded.

The relative position and prominence assigned to the various deities of the time will be clear from the number of chapters and verses devoted to each of them in this Purāṇa.

Name of the God	*Chapters*	*Verses*
Sun	131	4933
Brahmā	2	144
Gaṇeśa	5	117

Though, as said above, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is the work of Sun-worshippers, it has also incorporated other material bearing on Brahmā and Gaṇeśa. The worshippers of Brahmā joined hands with those of the Sun in order further to strengthen their position. They allied themselves to the devotees of Gaṇeśa, because he had come to occupy a place of high precedence in popular Hinduism, being considered the remover of obstacles. Thus, we here observe a fusion of different cult by interested propagators in an effort to gain a foothold for the Sun-cult within Hindu society.

We have noticed that, in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, much prominence is given to the conceptions of hell and heaven. Though these conceptions are post-Vedic and contain many elements of Semitic dualism (especially third century Manichaeism) which later on crystaleised as the dichotomy between light and darkness in Indian religion, they took a firm hold on the popular mind in India, and became associated with the ideas of retribution and reward, which gained extended currency among the people. It appears that, in order to win popularity and command the following of the common people, the authors of this Purāṇa set apart significant amounts of to the treatment of such topics. The authors of this Purāṇa tried to broad-base their cult, among the people by imbibing and assimilating other beliefs and practices which already had acquired a firm hold on their minds.

NOTES

1. *Ṛg-veda*, 1.50.7
2. *Ibid.*, 7.63.1
3. *Ibid.*, I.115.1.
4. *Ṛg-Veda*, 10.37.4.
5. *Ibid.*, 1.164.14.
6. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, ed. 1958, p. 80.
7. *Atharva-veda*, 4.16.2.
8. A. B. Keith, *The Religion and the Philosophy of the Vedas and Upaniṣads*, Vol. 31, ed. 1925, pp. 104-105.
9. The *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. I, ed. 1955, p. 92.
10. E.W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, ed. 1915, pp. 83-84.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
12. Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, Vol. II, ed. 1957, p. 229.
13. H.D. Bhattacharya, "Minor Religious Sects", *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 465.
14. D.R. Patil, *Cultural History of the Vāyu Purāṇa*, p. 192.
15. E.W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*. ed. 1915 p. 87.

16. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.47.2a.
    अण्डेन सह जातो वै अण्डस्यो वृद्धिमाप्तवान् ।
17. *Ibid*., 1.78.5-10.
18. H. Stuart Jones, "Mithraism". *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 757.
19. *Ibid*., p. 758.
20. *Yasht*.. X. 1.
21. Chapter 6 and 41.
22. Chapters 10-15.
23. 11.1-41
24. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.79.4b.
    तयोर्हि राज्ञो द्यौर्ज्ञेया निक्षुभा पृथिवी स्मृता ।।
25. R.C. Agrawala, "Aśvins in Sculptures from Rājasthan" *Journal of Indian History*, April, 1963, p. 227.
26. Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*. Vol. II 1977, pp. 136-37.
27. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.66.20-54.
28. Manech B, Pitharwella, Introducing Zorostrianism, pp. 32-33.
29. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.160.29-46.
30. *Ibid*., 1.62.19-20.
    मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्या जी मां नमस्कुरु ।
    मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं सत्परायणः ।।
    मद्भावना मद्यजना मद्भक्ता मत्परायणाः ।
    मम पूजाकराश्चैव मयि यांति लयं नराः ।।
31. H.H. Wilson, English Trans. ed. 1961, p. 193.
32. R.C. Zaehnar, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, pp. 100-101.
33. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.47.70.
    करवीरं यथेष्टं तु तथा रक्तं च चन्दनम् ।
    यथेष्टं गुग्गुलं तस्य यथेष्टं पायसं सदा ।।
34. *Ādibrahma Purāṇa*, 28.38-50.
35. *Ibid*., 28,61.
36. *Ibid*., 28.19.
37 M.N. Dutt. (English Translation), Chapters 7,16, and 39.
38. Will Durant, *The Story of Civilisation*, Vol. I, p. 372.
39. Clement Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilisation*, ed. 1927, p. 115.
40· A.S. Geden, "Sun, Moon and Stars (Hindu)", *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. Vol. XII, p· 84.

41. E.W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, ed. 1915, p. 196.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
43. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.17.5b.
    सृजत्येष जगत्कृत्स्नं पाति संहरते तथा ॥
44. E.W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology* ed. 1915, p. 192.
45. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.17.17.
    सर्वं यज्ञतपोदानतीर्थं वेदेषु यत्फलम् ।
    तत्फलं कोटिगुणितं लभेद्ब्धः प्रतिष्ठया ॥
46. *Ibid.*, 1.17.42 A.
    नास्ति ब्रह्मसमो देवो नास्ति ब्रह्मसमो गुरुः ।
47. D.N. Shukla, *Hindu Canons of Iconography*, Vol. II, ed. 1958 p. 187.
48. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1.17.18.
    कज्जनं स्थापयेद्यस्तु कृत्वा शालां मनोरमाम् ।
    सर्वांग मोदित पुण्यं कोटि कोटि गुणं लभेत् ॥
49. *Ibid*, 1.17.38.
    कपटेनापि यः कुर्मादब्रह्मशालां सुभानद ।
    संभार्जनाद वै कर्म सोऽपि प्राप्नोति तत्थलम् !।
50. H.Jacobi. "Brāhmaṇism", *Encylopaedia of Religion* and *Ethics*, Vol, II, pp. 810-811,
51. H.D. Bhattacharya, "Minor Religious Sects", *The Classical Age*, p.440.
52. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1.17.2b,3a.
    पूर्वं मेकार्णवे घोरे नष्टे स्थावर जंगमे ॥
    स्वयंभूरभवद्देवः सुरज्येष्ठश्च तु भूर्रवः ।
53. Juan Roger Rivers, "The Problem of Gaṇeśa's Origin in the *Purāṇas Purāṇa*," January 1962, p. 102.
54. Alice Getty, *Gaṇeśa*, Introduction (ed. 1936), p. XX.
55. A. Barth, *Religions of India*, ed. 1952, p. 256.
56. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.23.6-11.
57. R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣnavismśaivism and Minor Religious Sects*, ed. 1928, p. 210.
58. *Ṛg-veda*. 2.29.6.
59. *Ibid.*, 7.104.3.
60. *Ibid.*, 9.73.8.
61. *Atharva-veda*, 5.19.3.

62. J.A. MacCulloch, "Eschatology." *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, p. 35.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 376.
64. E.W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology* ed. 1915, p. 109.
65. *Bhuviṣya Purāṇa*, XII.3.
66. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstras*, Vol. IV, p. 159.
67. F.C. Davar, *Iran and India through the Ages*, ed. 1962, p. 21.
68. *Op. cit.*, IV. 6.65-72.
69. R.C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, p. 307.
70. *Ṛg-veda*. 1.125.5.
71. *Ibid.*, ix, 113.11.
72. *History of Dharmaśāstras*, Vol. IV. p. 157.
73. *Brāhma Purāṇa*, 225.6-7.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND THE CASTE SYSTEM

The caste system is a unique to Indian society. A clear understanding of it is impossible if the evolution of the caste system is not properly understood in its various stages. The literature on caste, its nature and scope and the extent of its influence have been so vast and varied, conflicting and contradictory, that it becomes difficult to present the subject except in proper time-perspective. A study of the institution of caste, which has its devout advocates as well as uncompromising critics, is not only necessary for understanding the structure and evolution of Hindu society, but also useful for understanding of Indian history, culture and civilisation.

Origin of Castes

The earliest references to the caste system are found in the *Puruṣasūkta* of the *Ṛg-veda*, which is regarded by several scholars as a later composition. It states that the Brāhmaṇa emerged from the mouth of the Ādi-Puruṣa, the Kṣatriya from his arms, the Vaiśya from his thighs and the Śūdra from his feet.[1] "Of the Upaniṣads, the *Brihadāraṇyaka* gives an account of the origin of the *varṇas* in this way. In the beginning there was Brahmaṇa only. But alone, he could not prosper well. Therefore, he further created a form or a pattern or type with a view to welfare, viz. the Kṣatra ; this consisted of the gods Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu and Īśāna..Still however, Brahmaṇa found that it could not fare satisfactorily : therefore, it created the Vaiśya in the form of the gods. Vasus, Ādityas, Rudras, Viśvedevas and the Maruts. Even then, Brahmaṇa could not make much progress : so it created Śūdra varṇa in the form of the god Pūṣan. In spite of these creations, again, Brahmaṇa did not develop well : therefore, he still further created the form of Dharma for welfare."[2] In the *Mahābhārata* a slightly different account of the orgin of the species has been provided. There we are told that the first three castes were created first, and the Śūdras afterwards for serving the other three castes. Another account of the origin of the castes given in the same text is that Brahmā had six sons born to him of his mind.[3] They were Marīchi, Atri, Añgiras, Pulastyaḥ, Pulahaḥ, and Kṛtu. Kaśyapa was the son of Marīchi. The whole creation then emanated from Kaśyapa. Yet another variation of this theory is to be found in the same text where it is stated that the Brāhmaṇa was created to preserve the Vedas and the knowledge of the scriptures, the Kṣatriya for ruling the earth and for the protection of the people, the Vaiśya for supporting the two other *varṇas* (mentioned above) and his self by cultivation and trade, and the Śūdra to serve the other three castes.[4] According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[5], Śaunaka, the son of Gṛtsamada, created the four castes. The same Purāṇa[6], at another place, states that Bhārgabhūmi, the son of Bhārgava, started the four castes. In the *Padmapurāṇa*, it is stated that Brahmā created the Brāhmaṇas first. After it all the other castes were born from him.

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* does not mention the mythical or divine origin of the caste system. It merely states that the worshippers of Brahmā were called Brāhmaṇas ; the defenders from aggression were styled as Kṣatriyas, the followers of trade and agriculture were known as Vaiśyas and the people discarded by Śṛutis were called Śūdras[8]. "Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras have divided themselves into different castes on the basis of their actions and dispositions."[9] "People gifted with intellectual and moral qualities became the Brāhmaṇas, those endowed with martial qualities were styled as Kṣatriyas and those possessing business qualifications were known as Vaiśyas."[10] "People who were infirm, with less impressive personality and stamina were known as Śūdras."[11] Thus this Purāṇa has a purely functional conception of the caste system. From the above it can be safely concluded that different theories about the origin of the caste are found in the sacred literature of ancient India. "It is thus seen that, in spite of the popularity of the Purusha theory of the origin of *varṇas* in later times, the sacred books give different and often contradictory and fanciful, accounts of the origin of *varṇas* and exhibit the greatest varieties of speculation on the subject."[12]

Duties of the Four Castes

Brāhmaṇas : They were expected to perform the six-fold duties of studying and teaching, performing *yajñas* and asking others to perform them and the accepting and giving of gifts.

Kṣatriyas : Their duties were to study, protect the people, to give away gifts and enjoy material pleasures.

Vaiśyas : Their duties were study, the giving of gifts, the protection of animals, the cultivation of land, banking, trade and business.

Śūdras : Their chief duty was to serve the three upper castes.

The caste system has remained an important institution of Indian social life. The relative position of the different castes is the social pattern of our country has, however, never remained static. It is true that the Brāhmaṇas tried their most to maintain their supremacy in society, but with the passage of time, the Kṣatriyas were already beginning to question it in the Upaniṣadic age. Buddha, as we knew, laid the greatest emphasis on equality and maintained that the conduct of an individual is the prime factor in his life. But with the coming of the Āndhras and Śuñgas, there was a swing back to the Brāhmaṇic conception of the Āryan society. When foreigners settled in India and made this country their home, they adjusted themselves in the Hindu social system and were classed as Kṣatriyas and mixed *varṇas*. The Guptas were the leaders of the Brāhmanical revival, but they displayed a sort of liberalism, toleration and universalism. They themselves worshipped the god, but the Buddhist and the Jaina Vihāras were also supported by them. The great movements of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism attained their popularity during this age and these played a prominent part in liberalising their attitude towards the Śūdras. In this atmosphere of social mobility the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* as will be shown below condemned the idea of birth as the sole determining factor of the caste system and argued that the actions and functions of an individual alone should determine his caste.

Bhaviṣya Purāṇa and the Caste System

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* regard actions and functions of the individual as the only basis of caste. They speak in frank and fearless language, Their views are forceful and unambiguous as can be seen from the following arguments.

BIRTH

It is difficult to state the time and circumstances under which some writers propagated the view that birth is the determining factor in caste. It is obvious that, in order to maintain a closed racial purity, and in order to avoid social controversy, certain witnesses took shelter under texts that favoured their view and made birth the sole and exclusive basis for the determination of the caste of an individual. H.C. Ray Chaudhury observes that "this tendency, together with other factors such as the admission into the Brāhmaṇical polity of new tribes and clans, sometimes from well-defined geographical areas with their own idea about *mana* (a power and influence, not physical, and in a way, supernatural), and rules regarding *connubium* and commensality, may have been responsible for the wide vogue, side by side with *varṇa*, of the important word, *jāti* which primarily meant 'birth', but later, by an extension of the sense, also a social group, the membership of which was supposed to be based on birth. With the gradual crystallization of such groups into exclusive and inelastic units to which the designation caste properly applied, the importance of birth as the main determining factor in social classification was recognised by a notable fraternity of law-givers and publicists."[13]

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions that birth can never be considered the decisive factor in determination of the caste of an individual.[14] It cites the examples of various *ṛṣis* like Parāśara, Śukadeva, Vaśiṣṭha, Mandapāla, etc. who were of low origin, but attained the highest wisdom due to their austerities. We find that this list is found in many Purāṇas and in the *Mahābhārata* with mutual variations. Opinions among scholars and historians are bound to differ in the matter of the *ṛṣis* or their historicity, but it appears that there obtained a practice among *ṛṣis* to marry Śūdra girls. Buddha ridiculed the idea of caste based on birth. He says: "One does not become a Brāhmaṇa by birth, one does not become an outcaste by birth one ; becomes a Brāhmaṇa by actions, one one becomes a Śūdra by actions.

Suttanipāta,, 641.

"He (Buddha) ignores completely and absolutely all advantages or disadvantages arising from birth, occupation and social status, and sweeps away barriers and disabilities arising from the arbitrary rules of mere ceremonial or social impurity."[15] The *Jātakas* also lay emphasis on actions rather than on birth for the determination of caste. We come across various passages which strengthen this view. The *Uddhaka Jātaka* (IV. pp. 297-304-G.G. 62-76) declares that right conduct is the only way to bliss and a thousand Vedas will not lead to it. In the words of the *Suttanipāta*, caste did not prevent a man from attaining the qualities of a Brāhmaṇa provided he overpowered his passions.[16] The same text states that Mataṅga, the son of a Cāṇḍāla, is said to have attained infinite bliss, which many Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas could not attain.[17] In the list of the authors of the Therā and Therī-gāthās, at least 10 among 259 Therās and eight out of about 59 Therīs belonged to the sections of society which may be regarded as Śūdras. They included an actor, a Cāṇḍāla, a basket-maker, a trapper and a female slave. Similarly, certain Jain texts maintain that birth is not the controlling factor in caste. "The first female disciple of Mahāvīra is said to have been a captured slave."[18] Vaiṣṇavism played a considerable part in improving the status of the Śūdras. These texts maintain that a Śvāpacha having sincere faith and devotion is considered dearer to God than a Brāhmaṇa having other qualities but lacking in faith. The *Brāhma Purāṇa*[19] also mentions that a cultured Śūdra, with a knowledge of the Vedas, is like a Brāhmiṇ. In the *Mahābhārata* also, one comes across several passages laying down that birth may not be regarded as the basis of caste. In the "Vanaparvan" (181-42-43) we are told that truthfulness, restraint, generosity, non-injury and constant adherence to *dharma* lead men to fruition, and it is certainly neither caste nor family that earn his rewards. Similarly in the Śānti Parvan (189.4&8) we are told that a person who possesses truthfulness, generosity, and is free from hatred and wickedness, and is kind, is a Brāhmiṇ. If these qualities are found in a Śūdra and do not exist in a Brāhmiṇ, then the Śūdra would not be a Śūdra and a Brāhmaṇa would not be a Brāhmiṇ. The "Vanaparvan" (216-14-15) states that a Śūdra is a Brāhmaṇa, who always aims at self-restraint, truthfulness and *dharma.* The *Brahma Purāṇa*[20] mentions that a Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya can become a Brāhmiṇ by following the conduct ordained by *dharma* accepting the means of livelihood allowed the latter. It is also further stated in the same Purāṇa that a Śūdra can become a Brāhmaṇa and a Vaiśya can become a Kṣatriya performing virtuous actions.[21] In the *Bhāgvata Purāṇa* we also find that the *varṇa* of an individual is determined by his deeds and not by his birth. "People, who have grasped the true meanings of the Vedas, have stated that the *dharma* of man, is by and large determined on the basis of innate tendencies in accordance with the time conducive to the welfare of men, and in this and in the next world."[22] It is asserted that "Brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas regard a virtuous Śūdra as the effulgent Viṣṇu of the universe, the foremost one in all the three worlds."[23]

Study of the Vedas

The study of the Vedas cannot make any individual a Brahmin. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* states that a Cāṇḍāla or a Śūdra can study the Vedas by fraud or by going out of the country.[24] But his caste cannot be considered higher on that account alone. This indirectly implies that the practice of teaching of the Śūdras by the Brāhmins was not in vogue in those days. But the Śūdras or others like them who were despised could, after the betterment of their social condition, aspire for Vedic studies through several agencies. We come across various instances of educated Śūdars in the Gupta Age. A passage of Yājñavalkya suggests the existence of a teacher of servants. In the *Mahābhārata* we come across a legend where a *dharma*-knowing fowler is teaching the duties of the *varṇas* and code of moral conduct to Kauśika, a Brāhmaṇa *ṛṣi*. In the *Mṛchakaṭika*, the judge reprimands Śakāra : 'A low caste fellow, you are talking of Vedic wisdom, yet your tongue has not fallen off'. The existence of such Śūdras is also attested to by the *Vajrasuci*, which speaks of the Śūdras, who are learned in the Vedas, grammar, Mīmāṁsa, Sāṁkhya, Vaiśeṣika etc.[25] "The Śūdras can have sacred thread, *daṇḍa*, deer's skin and say prayers, etc. none can deny them these things."[26] "The Vedas cannot purify a person who has fallen off in his conduct. It is true that the study of the Vedas is the chief duty of the Brāhmaṇas but character is their major characteristic."[27] "A Brāhmaṇa having studied the four Vedas but devoid of good conduct cannot do his duties properly as a eunuch cannot perform the duties of a woman."[28] "In the matters of religious ceremonies a Brāhmaṇa and a Śūdra are equal. There is difference in name only. Otherwise there is no spiritual or external difference between them."[29] "The *saṁṣkāras* are unable to increase age, beauty etc. of an individual. People who have undergone all *saṁskāras* have neither more strength nor are more beautiful and nor of longer age."[30] "A person gifted with the power of *mantras* and purified by *saṁskāras*, but of evil conduct, cannot cross the ocean of this world."[31] "The mode of the birth of a Brāhmaṇa and a Śūdra is the same. All castes are equal. *Saṁskāras* are useless."[32] The *Padma Purāṇa* (26-135) also mentions that the study of Vedas is not sufficient to attain position of a Brāhmaṇa. A Brahmin, who does not understand the intrinsic meanings of the Vedas, is like a Śūdra. The crucial factor in the determination of the caste of an individual is, as the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* would have it, only his conduct, and, the arguments that the knowledge of the Vedas alone can confer that status does not hold much water.

Profession

We have seen that the political and cultural compulsions led the higher castes to follow the professions of the lower castes and *vice versa*. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, like many other kindred texts, has high praise for the real Brāhmaṇas. The *Purāṇa* holds it in admissible that the spiritual and intellectual leaders of the society should follow the professions meant for the lower castes.[33] It maintains that the Brāhmaṇas, who graze animals like cows, buffaloes, horses, goats and sheep, cannot be regarded as Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇas, who follow the professions of servants, shop-keepers and blacksmiths, must be held to have lost caste. These stanzas breathe an air of respect for true Brāhmaṇas and forbid them to follow professions not meant for them.

Food

The food habits of an individual are an important factor in the formation of his personality. The Brāhmaṇas were enjoined to be especially particular about them. Certain kinds of food were forbidden them. "The Brāhmaṇas, who take meat, onion, liquor, and the milk of the she-camel or sell it, cannot be regarded as Brāhmaṇas."[34] Accepting food at the time of birth or death [of another] is also forbidden to them."[35] Yājñavalkya also prohibited certain kinds of food for the twice-born. They were not allowed to drink wine. If this rule was violated, the individual must undergo penance.[36] Having eaten the forbidden food, an individual must fast until his entrails become empty. This state is generally attained after seven days. Or he may, with the same end in view, during the winter season, bathe in cold water both morning and evening. Or he may perform a *kricchra* penance, which lasts for 12 days.[37] "In case one has eaten any kind of forbidden food, or that given by a person whose food must not be eaten, the means of removing the guilt is to sprinkle water while one recites the Taratsamandi Riks."[38] But according to Vijñaneśvara these penances are unnecessary if a Śūdra wife drinks wine.[39] Yājñavalkya also forbade the use of milk of a cow in heat, within ten days of the birth of her calf, and of one without a calf; as also of a camel, a single-hoofed animal, a woman, a wild animal or a sheep.[40] According to Fa-Hien, onions and garlic were taken by Cāṇḍālas only.[41] It appears that, for maintaining the mental and spiritual purity of the Brāhmaṇas, only such food was allowed to them in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and other texts.

Physical Equality

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions in clear language that all human beings are physically and physiologically equal. It stresses the truth that all castes have common desires, origins, feelings, tendencies, responses, etc. The differences lie neither inside nor outside, neither the experiencing of pleasure nor pain, nor in wealth, fear, form, steadfastness, age, weakness, mind, detachment, *dharma*, body, love, or height. Equality is a physiological fact that calls the concept of heredity in question ; all men are born equal and the idea of irreversible and inherent differences is unthinkable. Even the gods, after all their wonted testing and searching of people, will not discover any difference between a Brāhmaṇa and a Śūdra.[43] The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* criticize the views held by some writers that Brāhmaṇas are white, Kṣatriyas red, Vaiśyas yellow and the Śūdras black in colour. Indeed, the *Purāṇa* avers that Brāhmaṇas are not white like the rays of the moon, the Kṣatriyas are not red like the flowers of *taisu*, the Vaiśyas are not yellow like *hritālah* and the Śūdras are not black like coal.[44] Similarly the *siddhis* accessible through *mantras* can be gained both by the Śūdras and the Brāhmaṇas. After performing certain austerities, a Śūdra, too, can gain the power to curse others.[45] The commingling of different races and their assimilation into the Indian fold, the *anuloma* and *pratiloma* marriages, and the climatic conditions would have played a considerable part in eliminating the colour distinctions which were present at the time of the coming of the Āryans. Hence the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* discarded the caste theory based on colour. "A father has four sons. All the sons, naturally, must belong to the same caste. God is the father of all people. Then where lies the difference of caste ?"[46] "The fruit of a tree are alike in colour and shape and alike to touch and taste. Human beings are the fruits that grow in God's tree. How then can we make distinctions as between the fruit of the same tree ?"[47] If you call this body as that of a Brāhmaṇa, how can you ask if one part of him or all of him is a Brāhmaṇa ? If one part is known as a Brāhmaṇa, then the Brāhmaṇahood will end with the cutting off of that part. If the whole body be a Brāhmaṇa, then a person who performs the last rites will incur the sin of killing a Brāhmana."[48] "A horse can be easily told apart from a herd of cows, but a Śūdra cannot be so regarded as distinct from the twice-born".[49]

Saṁskāras

The performance of *saṁskāra*, we have noted in passing, has nothing to do with caste, also that the proper and regular performance of these is in no wise a surrogate for *acara*—the conduct which caste demands. "The people who have undergone all *saṁskāras*, but are mean and fallen from their conduct, cannot claim to belong to the same caste. People without *saṁskāras*, but following high ideals, must be regarded as good people."[50] "An individual who has fulfilled the canons or his *saṁskāras* but is of evil motive, thief, liar, the killer of a Brāhmaṇa, sinner, [or] deceiver must be regarded as a low man.'[51] "Among human beings all are equal. The performance of proper duties makes the only difference."[52] Conduct and the character are all. Similarly the *Mahābhārata* (Anu. 143.60) also mentions that neither birth nor *saṁskāras*, nor learning nor being born in a particular family could be regarded as efficient grounds for deciding the *varṇa* of the twice-born. It is the conformability of individual conduct to revealed and scriptural law that determines his caste. "Neither the performance of the *agnihotra* nor the knowledge of the Veda is of any use, for the gods are pleased through good conduct which is stated by the *srutis*. Brāhmaṇas who do not keep up a high standard of conduct should not be honoured; on the other hand, even a religious Śūdra be honoured."[53] "The argument that even the Śūdra of good conduct can attain Brāhmaṇahood in the next birth is repeatedly advanced in the didactic sections of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas* and is also reproduced in the *Vajraśūci*."[54]

The foregoing would admit of the following conclusions. The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* affirm with considerable emphasis and maintain that the caste of an individual is determined by his function and actions. "A Brāhmaṇa cannot be called a Brāhmaṇa if he abandons his duties. Similarly a Kṣatriya will not be styled a Kṣatriya if he does not perform his ordained duties of protection. So is the case with a Vaiśya and a Śūdra."[55] Caste is subject to change. "A Śūdra can be a Brāhmaṇa and *vice versa*. A Kṣatriya can become a Vaiśya and so the latter can adopt the profession of the former."[56] The *Brāhma Purāṇa* (223.56-58) also states that a Brāhmaṇa is not a Brāhmaṇa by virtue of birth, *saṁskāras*, *śruti*, and *smṭti*, but by his high conduct. In this country people attain Brāhmaṇa-hood by their virtuous actions. A truthful Śūdra is a Brāhmaṇa. A Brāhmaṇa is a Brāhmaṇa when he possesses the pure knowledge of Brahman. Pāṇini (5.1.124) refers to the nature and conduct which ought to characterize a Brāhmaṇa. There are many references in the *Mahābhārata* to the effect that virtuous actions are the only factors which determine the caste of an individual. In the discussion between Yudhiṣṭhira and the Python, it is stated that the individual moral traits determine one's caste. "Not by birth are the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras and Mleicahas differentiated but by their respective qualities and deeds."[57] Similar ideas are also found in the *Vajraśūcī Upaniaṣad* which may have been derived from some such text as the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.

The arguments against caste, summarised in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, may be fruitfully compared with the arguments advanced in the different Buddhist texts. To the question what makes a man a Brāhmaṇa, the Buddha replies by stating "...In the case of plants, insects, quadrupeds, serpents, fish and birds, there are many species and marks by which they can be distinguished ; in the case of man, there are no such species and no such marks ... that distinctions made between different men are mere matters of prejudice and custom ; that it is wisdom and goodness that make the only valid distinction, that make a man a Brāhmaṇa ; that the Arhat is, therefore, the true Brāhmaṇa ; and that it is only the ignorant who have, for so long, maintained that it was birth that made a man a Brāhmaṇa."

As regards the claim that the Brāhmaṇas are the most distinguished of the four *varṇas* and they are pure and white, Buddha gives the answer by stating that a prosperous member of any one of the four *varṇas* would find members of each of the other three to wait upon him and serve him. There was no difference between them in this respect. Then, secondly, he points out how a wicked man (whatever his *varṇa*), will in accordance with the doctrine of *karman* be acknowledged by all good men (not only by Buddhists), be re-born in some state of woe; and a good man in some state of bliss. Thirdly, a criminal, whatever his *varṇa*, would be equally subject to eternal punishment for his crime. And lastly, a man, whatever his *varṇa*, would, on joining an order, on becoming a religious monk, receive equal respect and honour from the people."

To the question that Brāhmaṇas were originally born of Brahmā, the Buddha replies that they make their claims in forgetfulness of the past. The claims have no basis in fact. It is righteousness and not class distinction that make the real difference between man and man. Do we not daily see Brāhmaṇa women with children and bearing sons just like other folk ? How can they then say that they are born of God?"[58] Similar ideas are expressed in the *Silavim Jātaka*. Birth and caste cause conceit, verily is virtue the highest, learning has no value for him who does not possess virtue. Khattiya, Brāhmaṇa, Vessa, Sudda, Caṇḍala and Pukkasa will all be equal in the world of the gods, if they have acted virtuously here. Of no value are the Vedas, of no value is the birth or caste for the future world, only one's own virtue brings him happiness in the next world."

Similarly Bṛagū lectures on the basis of *varaṇa-dharma* in the *Mahābhārata* and maintains that *varṇas* are determined by *dharma* and not *dharma* by *varṇas*. According to him, he who is sanctified by Jātakarma and other *saṁskāras*, who is pure in conduct, who is devoted to Vedic studies, and who is always mindful of his conduct, his behaviour with others, he with whom truth, charity, abstention from malice or injuries to other, mercy, modesty, benevolence and penance are associated, is called a Brāhmaṇa (*Śānti*. 189.2-4). He who follows the duties proper for Kṣatriyas, studies the Vedas, makes gifts and gains wealth, is called a Kṣatriya (*Ibid*., 189.6.). He who tends cattle, is engaged in agriculture and [possesses] the means of acquiring riches, who is pure in conduct and attends to the study of the Vedas is called a Vaiśya (*Ibid*., 189.8). Lastly, one who accepts any sort of food indiscriminately, who is prepared to do any work, who does not study the Vedas and whose conduct is generally indiscriminate and impure, is a Śūdra (*ibid*.,189.7). Bhṛigū further adds : "If those characteristics as described regarding a Śūdra are not observable in a so-called Śūdra then, and those characteristics described regarding a Brāhmaṇa are not observable in a so-called Brāhmaṇa then, such a Śūdra is no Śūdra and such a Brāhmaṇa, too, no Brāhmaṇa at all."[59] In the "Anuśāsana Parvan" (chap. 10) the story is related of a Śūdra, who, contrary to the traditional customs, became an ascetic and performed sacrifices. He was not punished for his breach of caste rules, but rather was rewarded, being born a prince after death."[60] The same text maintains, "After being a Brāhmaṇa, one becomes a Kṣatriya, or a Vaiyśa or a Śūdra or a barber, then again a barber becomes a Brāhmaṇa and a twice-born becomes a slave".[61] Such ideas did affect the position of the Śūdras. "The fourth community, the Śūdras, were not a race of lowermen, but what may be termed 'the rest.' They were the redeemables of *dharma* and formed an essential part of society, not looked down upon but only needing attention. Marriages between Śūdra and the members of 'other classes' were common."[62]

Caste in Iranian Society

Before we discuss the different causes which compelled the Maga Brahmins to repudiate the prevalent basis of the caste system, we should have a conspectus of the caste system in Iran. The Iranian society was divided into four parts (*pishtras*) corresponding with those described in the *Puruṣa Sūkta*. Thus the Athravas (priest) would correspond the Brāhmaṇas, the Kathaesthas (warriors) to the Kṣatriyas, the Vastriyas Fshouyant (Chiefs of the family) to the Vaiśya and the Huitis (Labourers) to the Śūdras. "That the ideal society under the Sassanids was a system of four classes, priests, warriors, scribes and bureaucrats, and finally artisans and peasants, is fairly attested."[63]

We come across references of birth determining the class of an individual in Iranian society under Sassanid rule. Every member of the society had a special position in it. "It was all ordained by the Sassanid rule that no man should aspire for [a] higher position than [that] which was allotted to him at the time of birth."[64] "The anonymous author of the Pehlavi book, *Manoge Kharz*, says that the artisans should not interfere in those things which they do not understand. Rather, they should perform their duties allotted to them. They should charge proper wages. A person who performs a job unknown to him is a fool and does a useless job."[65] But there was not any total rigidity in the matter of class mobility. That is to say, in Iran, while there may be social classes, "there is no caste, and the movement of an individual from class to class has been and remains, relatively free".[66] "Men can readily change their social status. A ballet-dancer was the favourite of Fath Ali Shah. The son of a Fellah may be Vizier tomorrow. Lowly birth is not a bar to the highest position."[67] A curious method was employed by the Iranians to effect a change in it. The case of a person possessing better intelligence was referred to the king. The latter appointed examiners. The test conducted by the examiners allotted him a position suited to his intelligence and dispositions. "If a commoner distinguished himself in quite an extraordinary way, he was summoned by the king, who had him examined by the priests and the latter took him into their body or placed him among the warriors or secretaries, according to his qualifications."[68]

After Zoroaster, Mānī and Mazdak, the two great religious leaders, and reformers, played a prominent role in the history of Iran. Their doctrines and teachings had a considerable effect on Iranian society. "The doctrines of Mānī divide the society into three classes, as the Elect, the Hearers, and the Wicked." "The Elect, immediately after death, ascend by means of 'the pillar of glory', to the moon, and thence are conveyed to paradise; the Hearers must pass through a long process of purification and of wanderings to and fro, before they join the Elect; while the souls of the wicked roam about the world, in a condition of helpless misery until the final conflagration, and are then consigned for ever to the realm of darkness."[69] The religion of Mānī also laid great emphasis on the universal aspect. "He [Mānī] aimed at creating a new universal religion and proclaimed himself an apostle of Christ . . .[70] "The religion of Mānī was cosmopolitan, quietist, ascetic and unworldly."[71]

Mazdak taught and emphasised the religious and economic equality of all people. "Among the commands which he [Mazdak] laid upon the people and earnestly enjoined was this, that they should possess their property and families in common. It was, he said, an act of piety that was agreeable to God and would bring the most excellent reward hereafter: even if he had laid no religious commandment upon them, yet the good works with which God was well pleased consisted in such co-partnership." "They [the Mazdakites] asserted that God placed the means of subsistence in the world in order that His servants might share them in common, but men had wronged one another in that respect. The Mazdakites said that they would take from the rich for the benefit of the poor, and give back to those who has little their due portion at the expense of those who had much; and they declared that he who possessed more than his share of wealth, women and property had no better right to it than any one else."[72] Mazdak tried his best to popularise and propagate Socialism of modern times. In such teachings, we all know that class distinctions fade away. He believed that distinctions and differences are certainly not made by God. Rather did he believe that equality was desired by Him. "All evils in Mazdak's view, were to be attributed to the Demons of Envy, Wrath, and Greed, who had destroyed the equality of mankind decreed and desired by God, which equality, it was his aim to restore."[73]

These teachings of social, economic and religious equality got wide currency. It also won a large number of followers. Khurram, the wife of Mazdak, also led the movement after him. "The converts to her [Mazdak's wife] doctrine were called either Mazdakites (after her husband) or after her, Khurramites. The sect continued to flourish in Āzarbayjān, Armenia, Daylam, Hamadān, Dinawar, I sfahān and Ahwāz—in other words, throughout the North and West of Persia until the days of Abū Muslim, and even afterwards."[74] All the above movements played some part in the shaping of the outlook of the people who wanted to bring about a synthesis between Iranian and Indian elements through the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.*

Why Magas to refute Birth as Basis of Caste system

We have noticed above that the Maga Brāhmaṇas of Iran enjoyed supreme religious, civil and economic powers in their country. We have also noted that they came to India and became associated with Sun-worship here. Persons with traditions of supremacy in their repective domains of activity would not yield or submit to a reduced or diminished position, They came here suffused with feelings of social, economic and religious equality, and therefore, could not tolerate the differences and distinctions imposed upon them through the Indian caste system. Their outlook on caste and society was catholic and liberal and found expression in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.*

They knew that they were capable, energetic and gifted with all qualities that usually went with a good social position. Their ideology and thoughts found expression in the vigorous attack on caste based on birth in the text of this *Purāṇa.*

vii. *Conclusion*

In India the order of caste has been mostly a theoretical conception that was adumberated by the orthodoxy and that sought to supplant a rude, pre-contract, natural authority by a systam of given law. Its motivation must have been ethical and undeniably benign in its uncorrupted source. In social affairs the process of challenge and response is as efficacious as in other walks of life. It conduces to the progress of a civlization as much as it serves to explain. Thus conceptual rigidity regarding the caste system acted as the challenge which evoked a response in the criticism and repudiation of the same. We observe that when, in thelater Vedic period, the Brāhmaṇas arrogated to themselves a higher position and thereby sought to intensify the rigidity of caste, the Kṣatriyas called their views, in question. The *Upaniṣads* and later the doctrines promulgated by Buddha, Mahāvīra and other teachers, constitute pointed and abundant response to the rigidity of the caste challenge. Another section of thought represented by the materialists and agnostics challenged the entire system of social values embodied in the order of caste. In the Maurya period the attitude of state was secular to use a modern term. Then there was another phase in which the rigidity of the social system based on caste was re-emphasised in Brāhmaṇic circles and among the ruling class. But this posed another challenge which was met by a new response in thought and practice represented by Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, etc. The rule of the foreigners like the Śakas, Kuṣaṇas, etc. created conditions for the growth of aviable response. In course of time the Purāṇas emerged as the carriers of the synthetic approach which sought to reconcile orthodox çonception to the changed circumstances. The Gupta age provided a congenial atmosphere for the growth of this thought and literature. But other texts deriving inspiration from some foreign sources also denounced the system of social values implict in the caste system. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is a very important text of this category and occupies a central and an important position in the history of literature of Hindu social organisation. In this respect its importance and contribution are significant and original in that it represents an entirely new outlook on social affairs.

NOTES

1. X-97.
2. P.H. Prabhu, *Hindu Social Organisations*, ed. 1973, pp.291-92.
3. *Ādiparvan*, 65.10, II.
4. *Śānti Parvan*, 72.6-8.
5. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, 4.8.I.
6. *Ibid.*, 4.8.9.
7. *Uttara Kāṇḍa*, 38-44.
8. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* I.44.9-10.

बृहत्त्वाद्भगवान्ब्रह्मा नाभेयस्तस्य ये जना : ।
भक्त्यासस्ता : प्रपन्नाश्च ब्राह्मस्ते प्रकीर्तिताः ।।
क्षत्रियास्तु क्षतत्राणद्वैश्या वार्ता प्रवेशनात् ।
ये तु श्रुतेद्रुर्ति प्राप्ता : शूद्रास्तेनेह कीर्तिताः ।।

9. *Ibid.*, I.44.24.

ब्राह्मण-क्षत्रिय-विशां शूद्राणां च परस्परम् ।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभाव-प्रभवैर्गुणैः ॥

10. 1.44.25,26,27A.

शमस्तपो दमः शौचं क्षांतिरार्जवमेव च ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥
शौर्यं तेजो धृतिदक्षियं युद्धे चाप्ययलायनम् ।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥
कृषि गोरक्षवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।

11. *Ibid.*, 1.44.23.

शोचंतश्च द्रवंतश्च परिचर्यासु ये नरांः ।
निस्तेजसोऽल्प वीर्याश्च शूद्रांस्तान ब्रवीत्तु सः ॥

12. N.K. Dutta, *Origin and Growth of Caste in India*, Vol. I, p.6.
13. *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, ed. 1958, pp.171-72.
14. *Op. cit.*, 1.42.22-26.
15. T.W. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Vol. II, ed.1956, p.102.
16. *Suttanipata*, V.16.
17. *Ibid.*, 137 and 138.
18. Jain, *Life as Depicted in the Jain Canons*, p. 107.
19. *Brāhma Purāṇa*, 223.53.
20. *Ibid.*, 223.14.
21. *Ibid.*, 223.32.
22. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. 7.11.31.
23. *Ibid.*, 5.1.35.
24. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.41.1-4.
25. R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras in Ancient India*, ed. 1958, p. 266.
26. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.41.10.

शिखाप्रणव संस्कार संध्योपासन मेखलाः ।
दंडाजिन पवित्राद्या : शूद्रेष्वपि निरंकुशाः । ।

27. *Ibid.*, 1.41.8.

आचारहीनान्न पुनंति वेदा यद्यप्यधीताः सहः षड्भिरंगैः ।
शिल्पं हि वेदाध्ययनं द्विजानां वृत्तं स्मृतं ब्राह्मण लक्षणं तु ॥

28. *Ibid.*, 1.41.9.

अधीत्य चतुरो वेदान्यदि वृत्ते न तिष्ठति ।
न तेन क्रियते कार्यं स्त्रीरत्ने नेव षंढकः ।।

29. *Ibid.*, 1.41.29.

सामग्रयनुष्ठानगुणैः समग्रा शूद्रा यतः संति समा द्विजानाम् ।
तस्माद्विशेषो द्विज शूद्र नाम्नो नाध्यात्मिको बाह्यनिमित्तको वा ।।

30. *Ibid.*, 1.42.8-11.

31. *Ibid.*, 1.42.17.

मंत्र पूतात्मसंस्कार युक्तोपि प्लवते न तु ।
ब्राह्मण्याद विकल्पं स पश्चाद्दुश्चरितो नरः ।।

32. *Ibid.*, 1.43.15.

शूद्रविप्रादयो येनौ न भिद्यंते परस्परम् ।
सर्वं धर्मं समान त्वात्संस्कारादि निरर्थकम् ।।

33. *Ibid.*, 1.40.36.

34. *Ibid.*, 1.40.38.

पलांडुलशुनादाश्च मृग्ष्युट्रीक्षीरपापिनः ।
मांस सर्वं रसक्षीर क्रय विक्रय कारिणः ।।

35. *Ibid.*, 1.40.40.

मृत सूत कलब्धान्नपा नाक्य वहारिणः ।
ब्रह्मदेव पितृभूत मनुष्येषु बहिष्कृताः ।।

36. *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*, iii. 255-56.

37. *Āpastaṁba Dharmasūtra*, iv.2.5.

38. N.K. Dutt, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p.189.

39. *Commentary on Yājñavalkya Smṛti*, iii. 255-56.

40. R.S. Sharma, *op. cit.*, ed. 1958, p. 257.

41. Legge, *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms*, p. 43.

42. *Op. cit.*, 1.41.35-38.

43. *Ibid.*, 1.41.39.

शूद्र ब्राह्मणयोर्भेदो मृण्यमाणोऽपि यत्नतः ।
नेक्ष्यते सर्वधर्मेषु संहतैस्त्रीदशैरपि ।।

44. *Ibid.*, 1.41.41.

न ब्राह्मणाश्चन्द्रमरीचिशुभ्रा न क्षत्रियाः किंशुकपुष्पवर्णाः ।
न चेह वैश्या हरिताल तुल्याः शूद्रा न चांगार समान वर्णाः ।।

45. *Ibid.*, 1.41.13-14.
    आभिचारि कमंत्राद्यैर्दुर्लभत्वादिभाषणैः ।
    ब्राह्मणस्यैव शक्तिश्चेत्के नास्यविनिहन्यते ।।
    तपः सत्यादि माहात्मयाद्देवतासमय स्मृति ।
    मंत्र शक्तिर्नृणामेषां सर्वेषामपि विद्यते ।।
46. *Ibid.*, 1.41.45.
    चत्वार एकस्य पितुः सुताश्च, तेषां सुतानां खलु जातिरेका ।
    एवं प्रजानांम हि पितैक एवं पित्रैका भावान्न च जातिभेदः ।।
47. *Ibid.*, 141.46.
    फलान्येथो दुंबर वृक्षजातेर्यथाग्रमध्यांतभवानि यानि ।
    वर्णाकृति स्पर्श रसैः समानि तथैकतो जातिरति प्रचिन्त्या ।।
48. *Ibid.*, 1.41.49-51.
49. *Ibid.*, 1.40.20.
    गोवर्गमध्यं च गतो ययाश्वो निर्धार्यते ज्ञैः सुविचक्षणत्वात् ।
    मनुष्यभावाद विशिष्यमापास्तद्वद्द्विजः शूद्रगणान्न भिन्नः ।।
50, *Ibid.*, 1.42.16.
    संस्कृतिऽपि दुराचारो नरकं याति मानवः ।
    निःसंस्कारः सदाचारो भवोद्विप्रोत्तमः सदा ।।
51. *Ibid.*, 1.43. 6-10
52. *Ibid.*, 1.40.21.
    मनुष्यजातेर्न परो विशेषो चः कल्प्यते सर्वनरानुयायी ।
    संस्कारयुक्ताहि क्रिया विशिष्ट द्विजन्म नां शूद्रविवेक हेतुः ।।
53. R.S. Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 276
54. *Ibid.*, p. 276.
55. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1.40.33.
    किं ब्राह्मण ये सुकृतं त्यजंति किं क्षत्रिया लोकमपालयंतः ।
    स्वधर्महीना हि तथैव वैश्याः शूद्रा स्वमुख्यक्रियया विहीनाः ।।
56. *Ibid.*, 1.40.47.
    शूद्रो ब्राह्मण तामोति ब्राह्मणश्चैति शूद्रताम् ।
    क्षत्रियो याति विप्रत्वं विद्याद्वैश्यं तथैव च ।।
57. *Śukranitiśāstra*. 1.75-76.
58. T.W. Rhy Davids, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, ed. 1956, pp. 104-5.
59. P.H. Prabhu, *op. cit.*, ed. 1963, pp. 310-11.
60. N.K. Dutt, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 170
61. VIII. 45.6-7.
62. K.M. Munshi, Foreword, *The Classical Age*, p. XXIV.

63. (i) R.N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, p. 54.
    (ii) Clement Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilisation*, ed. 1927, p. 139.
64. Arthur Christensen, *Iran under the Sassanids*, (Urdu. Translation from French by Mohammad Iqbal), p. 418.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 422.
66. Elgin Groseclose, *Introduction to Iran*, p. 43.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
68. Clement Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilisation*, ed. 1927, p. 144.
69. A.A. Bevan, "Manichaeism", *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 399.
70. Phillip K. Hitti, *The Near East in History*, ed. 1960, pp. 181-82.
71. E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Vol. I, ed. 1951, pp. 161-62.
72. Reynold A. Nicholson, "Mazdak", *Encyclopaedin of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 509.
73. E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Vol. I, ed. 1951, p. 170.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 313.

CHAPTER V

THE POSITION OF WOMEN

Introduction

The woman of the Vedic age occupied a high and honourable position. Her age of marriage was not less than 16 or 1.7 She enjoyed almost equal rights and opportunities with man. She could move freely in society. She enjoyed respect in and outside the home.[1] Her voice in the choice of her spouse was an effective one. Upanayana or the privilege of weaning *avyanga* was allowed to her as to boys. We come across various women—like Viśvavari, Lopāmudrā, and Ghośā who ranked as seers and composed hymns contained in the *Ṛg-veda*. Women scholars like Maitreyī and Gārgī were highly respected. This proves beyond doubt that the women of those times contributed their share to the advancement of knowledge and scholarship. The Satī and *purdah* systems were quite unknown. Religion treated the male and the female members of society equally. But there are certain passages in Vedic literature which argue the other side of the case that is against pre-minent status for women. There it is stated that women are fickle-minded and can fall an easy prey to a man who is adapt at the art of music and dance. "These remarks reflect the light-hearted cynicism of some poets, and do not embody the considered views of the leaders of society." "These occasional jarring notes did not acquire volume enough to subdue the total effect of harmony."[2]

Tolerance towards women survied into the age of the later Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads. Regarding the age of marriage, education and freedom of movement, the position remained liberal as before. Gārgi and Maitreyī, whose names have already been cited, discussedphilosophicaltopics of an abstrusenature with Yājñavalkya, who was regarded as one of the best authorities on Vedic lore. Tradition records the names of Indrāṇī and Śachi also as great authors. Kāsakritsna, a theologian, composed a work on Mīmāṁsa called Kāśakṛtsnī. According to *Mahābhāsya* (IV. I. 14. 3,155) the lady scholars who specialised in this branch of knowledge were designated

Kāśakṛtsnas. The *Kauṣitaki Brāhmaṇa* mentions a lady named Pathyāvatī, who earned the title of "Vāk" after finishing her course of study.[3] In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (VI, 417) we come across a ritual in which the father desires his daugter to become learned. Many women were devout performers of religious rites and singers of the holy hymns.

The personal attainments of women, together with the prevalent political conditions, contributed towards their being given a high place in society. Religiox, which accounted for a large part of social life had a role to play in confirming this pre-eminent and valued status. The Vedas enjoin unequivocally that no man should perform any religious rite or ceremony unless accompanied by his wife. Indeed, such rites, if performed individually, could bring no reward. The wife was regarded as a partner in the spiritual life.

We find a remarkable similarity between the position of woman in the Vedic age and during the time of the Gāthās. The Zarathustrian women even of ancient times never wore the veil but enjoyed reasonable freedom and educational facilities. They participated in ceremonial rites, and according to Dr. Dhalla, there were instances of women having officiated as priestesses and administered justice as well. Both righteous men and women were invoked with distinction in Zarathustrian ceremonies. Both men and women were invested with the sacred shirt and girdle, and both were supposed to fare equally in the next world according to their desires."[4]

During the later periods in which the Sūtras came to be written, we find a marked difference in the position of women. Conflicting views are heard about their place in society in those ages. Manu and Yājañavalkya at various places extol the qualities of woman, but they also do not hesitate in giving her a lower status in society.

Various factors contributed to this lowering of the status of woman in that age. Religious literature had grown enormously. One was expected to devote twelve years to the study of a single Veda. A great sanctity naturally attached to religious literature. It was declared that faulty recitation of this literature could bring calamities and troubles. The religious sacrifices had also grown in volume and number, and these tended growingly to make the association of the wife in religious matters a formal affair. Sometimes, the non-Āryan wives, ignorant of the scriptures, committed mistakes in their recitation. This shocked the orthodox priests and they declared that such wives should not be associated with their husbands in performing religious rituals. "The black non-Āryan wife may be her husband's associate in pleasure, but not in religious rituals."[5] Some writers generalised from this experience and declared that the entire sex was ineligible for Vedic studies. That dealt a very heavy blow to the status of woman. Thus the denial of education and the denial of access to Vedic study in the even impaired the equalty of her status with men in religious matters.

With the passage of time the Āryans began to live a luxurious life. The marriageable age of boys and girls began to be lowered. It led to the discontinuation of the *upanayana* ceremony for woman. "Round about 500 B.C. there arose a tendency to lower the marriageable age of girls, and as a consequence, to discourage tneir *upanayana* and education."[6] Her social amplitude and rounds and free movements began to be restricted. About the pre-Buddhist period, R.L. Mehta writes : "The general position of the wife was in no way better. The ideal of a wife in those days was that she should be equable, obedient, sweet of speech, fruitful, fair and famous, and [should] wait on the wishes of her husband. The woman virtually became a mere object of play with the rich, and to the average householder, an instrument of procuring progeny. She was like a servant."[7] Nevertheless the *Rāmāyana* portraying the picture of Sītā makes her the fully evolved model of chastity, purity, devotion, loyalty and faithfulness. An ideal which is still difficult to find in Indian literature was set. Yet there were individual instances when women fulfilled these exacting criteria and earned universal respect and honour in society.

Buddhism and Jainism, which, in brief, pointed to the renunciatory ways for gaining the highest wisdom, opened their gates to woman for getting the supreme bliss. We are quite familiar with the fact that Buddha was reluctant to admit woman to his Sañgha, but at least, he yielded when pressed by his step-mother. Jainism also opened its doors to women to practise the religious life and attain supreme knowledge. "The freedom which Buddhism and Jaịnism allowed to women could not but make them have, at least in a good number of cases, a far greater attraction for these two faiths than for Hinduism."[8]

Some ladies adopted these faiths. We find rich heiresses refusing tempting marriage offers and joining the preaching army of the new religion. Such, for instance, was the case of Guttā, Anopamā and Sumedhā, who eventually became famous preachers (*Therigāthā*. 54.56,73). Similar was the case of Sañghamitrā, the daughter of Aśoka, who went to far-off Ceylon to spread the gospel of Buddha. Jayantī, a daughter of king Sahasrānīka of Kauśāmbī, doffed her royal robe and became a devout nun, the moment her questions about the nature of individual soul, the ideal of life, etc. were satisfactorily answered by Mahāvīra.[9] Visākha called Mṛgāra Mātā was a famous donor of Buddhism. She was very learned and had a great influence on the members of her family and she was quite successful in converting them to Buddhism. There is a story in the Jātakas referring to a Jain father having four clever daughters, who toured through the country challening people to intellectual combats on philosophical matters.

With the passage of time, the standards of discipline of the preachers deteriorated and the initial zeal shown diminished. Many unworthy persons entered the monasteries and nunneries. The piety of the people began to be polluted. With the weakening of the moral fibre, the stage began to be set for the general loss in character of the monks and the nuns. During the time of Jātakas, we hear cases of moral turbidity, but still their number affected by this was limited. After discussing the character of many wicked women from the Jātakas, R.L. Mehta concludes : "We may not deny the existence of moral corruption, but we must emphatically hold that the perverse sentiments expressed before were not the sentiments of the people in general; they came from the mouth of those who through some reason or other, looked beyond this world, and whom Varāhamihira, a few centuries after, termed wicked persons.[10]

During the Brāhmaṇic renaissance the old discipline returned and was worked with a vengeance. The position of the Brāhmaṇas had suffered considerably at the hands of Buddhism and Jainism, and they wanted to retrieve the situation. With a throughness appropriate to a reformational counter-offensive, they tried to re-introduce rigidity in different aspects of social life. A number of authors vouch that the position of women suffered considerably during this age. In the *Mahābhārata* (IV.39.78B) it is hypothesized that sensual enjoyment is the soul aim of woman's existence. The *Mahābhārata* (XIII. 73.17) maintains that, for the satisfaction of the sex urge, women will eagerly unite with men. The *Padṇa Purāna*[11] is of the opinion that a woman is virtuous for want of place and opportunity to be othervise. As a result of these uncomplimentary views the *upanayana* for girls was discontinued. Manu (II.67) maintains that in the case of women the marriage ceremony is tantamount to and performed in the stead of the upanayana, serving the husband is equivalent to residence in the chouse of the) teacher, and the performance of the household duty (the same as) the (daily) worship of the sacred fire. Yājñavalkya (1.13) recommends the prohibition of *upanayana* of girls. This was the signal for the gradual 'spiritual disfranchisement' of women.[12] According to Manu (IV. 205-6; IX.18; XI. 36) they were denied the right to perform Vedic sacrifices and could not recite the Vedic *mantras.* They became Sūdras from the spiritual point of view. In the *Bhāgavat Gītā*[13] they are classed with the Vaiśyas and Śūdras which shows the lowering of their status. Since the religion of the Purāṇic age had a catholic outlook, it played some part in undoing the spiritual disfranchisement of women in throwing its doors open to all castes and sexes. It provided many channels for the fulfillment of the religious aspirations of women. The new religion which appealed mostly to faith and belief enlisted the support of woman to a considerable extent. This, however, served to improve their status only from the point of view of religion, the Purānas could not alter their social position with regard to education, early, marriage etc.

Woman as Wife

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* maintains that a good wife should regard her husband like a god [14] "Smṛti writers and digest writers also state that "the foremost duty of a wife is to obey her husband and to honour him as her god."[15] Certain writers were not satisfied with the above views and recommended some obnoxious and extravagant things for the woman. Saṇkhalikhitā states that a wife should not hate her husband even if he be impotent (or have swollen testicles), *patita* (guilty of a *mahāpātakam* and so an outcaste), devoid of a limb, since the husband is the god for a woman. Manu (V. 154) declares that a good wife should regard her husband as a god, whether he is immoral, loves another woman and lacks good qualities.[16] The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*,[17] however, have a theory of equality between man and woman when they state that the wife is half of a husbaud. It goes on to say that, where woman are not honoured, no sacred, rites yield fruit.[18] A man's half is his wife. She is her husband's best friend. She is the source of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa.*[19] No man should do anything disagreeable to his wife even if he is in a temper, for his happiness, joy, virtue—

all depend upon the wife.[20] The *Brahma-vaivarta-Purāṇa* goes many steps further when it states that the sanctity of gods, sages and holy places is all centred in her. The world is sanctified by her existence; and there is no sin that would not evaporate by her mere presence.[21]

Though the remark of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* that the wife is the half of a husband shows a feeling of equality, yet the *Purāṇo* could not rise above the general outlook that the woman is there to wait upon the man as if he were a god. The position of the *Purāṇa* accords with the general stand-point of the Smṛtis. "In the Brāhmaṇical sacred works of this [Smṛti] period, however, the duty of absolute obedience and devotion to the husband is strictly enjoined, as never before, upon the wife. The husband is the wife's supreme deity : by serving him, she wins heaven, though she may not honour the gods ; unlike her other relations and friends, he husband is the wife's sole refuge in this and the next world ; unlike her male relatives, the husband gives her immeasurable happiness.[22] Yājñavalkya also recommends complete obedience to the husband. "It was not the wife of the time of Kautilya who would bring an action for the defamation or assault and become a defendant in court for beating the husband. It was not the wife of the time of the Mānava who regarded "mutual fidelity" to be the highest duty. It was the wife of Yājñavalkya's age, permeated to the core, like pickle, with the new morals of Buddhism—with the *dharma* of abject obedience and unnatural tolerance."[23]

The duty of the wife is to please her husband by her good deeds, amiable and pleasing ways, sincerity and devotion. The service of the husband was to regarded as the gateway to heaven. She ought to be extra careful in her behaviour and obedience when she finds that her husband is angry with her. She should also mould herself according to the desires, inclinations and wishes of her husband. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* states that the way to respect elders is for a woman to adjust and mould herself according to the desires of others (husband and his relatives).[24] The husband is a living deity and should be worshipped and served as such. The expectation of Hindu writers in the matter of adjustment is entertained only in relation to the wife in the new home, creates a sense of subordination and dependence. It establishes the superiority of the male over the female sex. *Manu Smṛti* has a passage that declares that a woman deserves no independence. "She is dependen on [the] father in childhood, on her husband when she is marriedt and on the son in her old age."[25] The *Padma Purāṇa* puts this idea in the following language. "It was, therefore, natural that the happiness of each should be regarded as depending on the other. If there was complete harmony between the two, the house would be heaven, if there was discord, it would be hell."[26]

We have already referred to more honourable position the accorded to women during the Vedic and Upanisadic ages. The frequency of alien intrusions, such as those of the Scythians, Kuśāṇas, etc. in India and the establishment of their rule gave a powerful shock to the established pattern of life. The political reverses created a sense of despondency among the people. Moreover all the foreigners did not bring their wives with them. These naturally coveted native women and that made it necessary to protect them through *purdah* and other restrictions. It is a fact that the purity of the woman has always been a cardinal feature of Hindu *dharma*. She must be saved from the lustful eyes of the foreigners.

In order to protect the women from the menace of the conquering and marauding foreigners, it was necessary to restrict their movements and debar them from moving freely in society. For this it was necessary to lower the age of marriage. The inevitable result of this tendency was that the Indian woman had to deny herself much by way of learning and education. Being uneducated, she became the helpless dependent of man. Ignorance, illiteracy, subservience usually breed sin, vice and lust. Therefore, it was natural that the authors of this age branded woman as definitely inferior to man from all points of view and treated her as next only to chattel. To substantiate the aforesaid view, it would be better to quote Professor Indra: "[with] the advent of alien culture which did not entertain any high ideal of morality, the Āryan thought chastity and purity seemed ta be in danger, and in a fit of fearfulness, the priests of society had ordained a life of seclusion for women."[27] "As regards the position of the wife, the Smṛti commentaries, and digests of this period follow more or less the line laid down in the Smṛtis. The husband and other male relations, to begin with, must so arrange things that the wife never becomes independent. The wife must also be guarded not only against physical but also against mental unchastity for the sake of her off spring. This is best done in other ways than by keeping the wife in seclusion by force. The wife, for instance, should have her mind so occupied with the agreeable and compulsory duties of her household that she would not have leisure for thinking of other men and so forth."[28]

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* are not prepared to grant freedom to women. They follow the presecriptions of the Smṛtis with regard to the independence of women. The following is stated in this *Purāṇa*, "Sitting alone, laughing in the company of a stranger, standing at the gate, looking in the direction of the main road, speaking loudly, walking ahead of people, excessive laughing, exchange of things with the neighbours and such other activities should be avoided by women."[29]

All these factors led to the lowering of the status of women. Almost all the writers of that age shared this view and considered women inferior and subordinate to man. But an exception was Varāhamihira who considered the position of woman very high. He says: "Brāhmaṇas are pure at the feet ; cows at the back ; goats and horses in the face (mouth) ; and women are pure all over."[30] "Being objects of matchless purity, never are women defiled. For their menses remove their blemishes every month".[31] "Whether it is the wife, or the mother, men are brought into being only by women. What good can you expect, O, ungrateful men ! from censuring them?"[32] "Nowhere has the creator designed any gem other than women ; for, this gem gives delight to men, when heard or seen, touched or even remembered, for its sake are done righteous deeds and wealth amassed, from that do men derive worldy pleasures and offspring. Such damsets are the goddesses of fortune. Hence they should always be honoured at home with respect and wealth."[33] "Those houses that are cursed by respectable ladies [daughters-in-law] being not properly treated, will totally perish, as if destroyed by witch-craft".[34] But the odds were against Varāhamihira. His was a lone voice. It is difficult to say why the Maga Brāhmaṇs, the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, did not follow the recommendations of Varāhamihira, who was after all also one of them. The probable explanation may be that the authors followed to some extent the popular social view and did not have the courage of Varāhamihira to support the cause of women whole-heartedly.

Domestic Duties of the Woman

Considerable emphasis has been laid on the household duties of women in this Purāṇa. Various writers have written at length on this topic. The proper functioning and smooth running of the house has always been the primary duty of the wife—with the help and assistance of the husband. In fact both have been regarded as equal partners in the domestic sphere of life. "The *Avesta* (Yashta.15.4) describes the husband and the wife as *nmānopaiti* and *nmānopatnī*, showing thereby that they were equal partners and joint owners of the common household."[35] Beginning from Vedic times, household management has always remained in the hands of the wife. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* also grants supreme power to woman in this connection by stating that she must look after the servants, go out to supervise the work in the fields and keep the meal ready for her husband, waiting for him to come home. It was her duty to awaken the servants and assign them their proper duties for the day, and thus arrange the normal functioning of the household. Her kitchen duties are : cleaning the utensils, curdling the milk in and storing the curd in suitable utensils plastering the flour with fresh mud preparing delicious dishes, etc. According to Manu (v. 150) a wife should be an expert at home, present an attractive appearance and should know the proper use of money. The house must be properly dusted and decorated with flowers. Proper attention should be paid to the garden. She ought to keep a store of required things in the house. Weaving, looking after agriculture, cattle-breeding and upbringing of pets, etc., also formed part of her domestic duties. A.S. Altekar[36] and Indra[37] also mention similar duties for women in the house.

Thus we find that woman should be adept in cooking and cleaning, looking after servants, gardening, agriculture, weaving, etc. Thus her vocation was identified with the household economy.

Duties of Woman when Husband Is out

The absence of husband from the home meant for the wife a more restricted life. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*[38] states that "she should neither decorate herself nor use ornaments when the husband has gone away. She is permitted to go out when she must, but come back as soon as the work is over."[39] Veda Vyāsa (11.52) prescribes a more restricted life by stating that a wife, whose husband has gone abroad, should look unattractive and pale should not deck her self, should abstain from meals and remain devoted to her husband. Manu, (ix. 74-75) while not hiding his doubts about the integrity of women, enjoins upon the husband to make arrangement for the maintenance of the wife during his absence. If that is not done there is a likelihood of her going astray. The wife must acquiesce in the restrictions placed on her. If the arrangements for her maintenance are not made, she can make both ends meet by following an irreproachable craft. Yājñavalkya also shares these views by stating that "a woman whose husband has gone out to another country, should give up play, the decoration of the body, visiting and taking part in festivals and laughing and going to the house of strangers." *Saṅkhalikhitā* (quoted by Aparāṛka, p. 108, sm.e ; *vyavahāra*) imposes many restrictions on such wives whose husbands have gone abroad. It states that dancing, singing and such amusements must be avoided; drinks and sumptuous meals are to be dispensed with, and flowers, perfumes, etc., should not be used.

We have seen that the trend of the times was in favour of confining the woman to the four walls of the home. The instability and insecurity of life caused by factors already mentioned, impinged upon woman heavily, and as a safeguard she was asked to abide by certain restrictions. The number and nature of such restrictions must increase when the husband, her chief protector, is absent from the home. The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* do not go so far as to deny her a full meal during the absence of the husband, as recommended by other law-givers. This Purāṇa does not recommend a defected heart, a joyless face and does not require her to affect a distaste for common healthy recreation. It appears that, while the authors of the Purāṇa followed the trend of the times, they did not do so as strictly and implicitly as others. The restrictions imposed by the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* on decoration and ornaments would suggest that all adornment was meant for her husband only. There was no scope for this naturally when the husband was away. It is possible that what was sought to be avoided was the misconstruction by unsavoury persons of added beauty as suggestive or improper attention.

Age of Marriage

It is a well known that the bulk of women was married at the age of sixteen or seventeen during the Vedic age. A.S. Altekar, after citing various examples, comes to the same conclusion ; "Marriage in the Vedic age took place when the parties were fully grown up."[40] After the Vedic age, the woman's age of marriage began to be lowered. This started probably from about the fourth century B.C. Reasons have already been adduced for this phenomenon.

Having recommended that girls should be married at an early age, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* proceeds to mention five ages of girls thought eligible. They are gaurī, kanyakā, rohiṇī, nagnikā, and rajaswalā. The age classifications mentioned by different authors is not uniform. "Gaurī is of seven years, nagnikā of ten years, kanyakā of twelve years and above it, is rajaswalā."[41] Kāśyapa records that a girl is called gaurī when she is seven, a kanyakā at ten and kumārī when twelve years. Parāśara (vii.6-9) maintains that a girl of eight is called gaurī, at nine a rohinī, at ten she is a kanyakā and beyond that is rajaswalā. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* recommends that the best age of marriage is that of gaurī, medium is that of kanyakā, ordinary that of rohiṇī and the vilest *adharma* age is that of rajaswalā.[42] The *Vāyu Purāṇa*, (83.44) in order to popularize early marriage, offers spiritual incentive by stating that the sons of gaurī purify 21 generations on the father's side and six male ancestors on his mother's side. The authors of the *Brāhma Purāṇa*(165.8) appear to be in a great hurry and beat all records by stating that a girl should be married after the age of four years. *Rāmāyaṇa* maintains that Sītā was six years and Rāma 13 years of age at the time of marriage.[43] The *Mahābhārata* stipulates that a bridegroom of 30 shall marry a girl of 10, a bridegroom of 21 a girl of seven.[44] "In regard to infant marriages, the Sūtras generally admit the advisability of marrying [off] a girl when she is still too young to wear clothes, that is, before she becomes adult, or shows signs of maturity."[45] According to Manu a bridegroom of 30 shall marry a girl of 12 and of 24, a girl of eight. Yājñavalkya also recommends a low age of marriage for girls.

They did not stop at prescribing a low age of marriage, but they went further and proposed punishment for those persons, who tried to evade this obnoxious custom. "A girl who gets menses in the house of her parents hastens their fall and she is a Śūdra."[46] Yājñavalkya also maintains that the parents shall be guilty of the destruction of a fetus if the girl is not married before the age of puberty. Parāśara (vii. 6-9) follows a strict line by ruling that the parents and the eldest brother, on seeing an unmarried girl, reaching the state of rajaswalā, shall go to hell. The *pitris* of such a girl shall have to drink the menstural discharge. He does not spare Brāhmaṇas who marry a rajaswala girl. He says ; "The Brāhmaṇa who marries such a girl should not be spoken to, or admitted to dinner in the same row (as other Brāhmaṇas) and that he becomes the husband of a *vṛṣalī*". Thus a low status is apportioned to a Brāhmaṇa who marries such a girl. Yama, who flourished in the seventh century, goes many steps ahead by stating, that, if a suitable match is unavail able, the girl should be married before she comes of age, if necessary to an unsuitable person.

The Iranians did not advocate a low age of marriage for girls. "According to the *Avesta*, both manhood and womanhood were attained at the age of fifteen." "The ritual recited at the marriage ceremony, bidding the pair to express their consent after truthful consideration, points in the same direction".[48] Women were usually wedded at the age of fifteen or sixteen in ancient Persia (*Vendidād*: 14,15). "Generally the girls were engaged in childhood. They were married when they were young. A girl at the age of fifteen must be married."[49] From the ages of marriage, as prescribed by the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and by the Iranians, we find that the former could not keep up their tradition of adult marriage for their children. It is quite likely that they yielded to the prevailing prejudices that required a low age of marriage. They brought this *Purāṇa* in line with other texts in this regard.

The causes for recommending an early age of marriage for girls are four fold: political, religious, mythological and general. Among the political causes, the frequency and magnitude of the inflow of alien populations introduced sudden and recurrent changes in the cultural and social structure of society. The whole nature of social relations appeared to be in the melting pot. It is true that Hindu society survived this challenge and reasserted itself by bringing the foreigners into its fold and assimilating them to some extent. But during the days of tension and tussle, insecurity and unsafety, chaos and confusion, the situation remained fluid. The age-long social and religious concepts began to break up under the heavy weight of opposing and adverse circumstances. There grew a desire for license. "What we specially gather from this [*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*] is that, as a result of the political unrest and of the intercourse of the people with casteless and immoral foreigners, famine and pestilence, broke out, people became regardless of the Śrauta and Samarta Dharma, and immorality spread."[50] To stop this tide and to save the women from degradation and demoralisation, the writers thought it fit to marry the girls at an early age. "But with the admixture of races, the multiplicity of castes, their iron exclusiveness and the decay of morals, the only check to curb the growing desire for license among young men and women was to give them no chance of having a will of their own. Hence the convention that a girl must be married before she attains puberty."[51]

Among the religious causes we have seen that Buddhism and Jainism helped, to a considerable extent, the Brāhmaṇic writers, in lowering the age of marriage for girls. We have also seen that the number of young women joining Buddhist and Jain monastical orders increased enormously. In this way both the religions tried to reach every door-step so to speak. It caused great alarm among the Brāhmaṇas. They feared a new threat to their entrenched position. The causes that came to light of women going astray in the monastries and nunneries might have provided a hope to the Brāhmaṇic writers that they might once again be able to enforce early marriage. Such marriages began to be recommended for girls so that they may be involved in the sacrament of marriage before they could think of joining these churches towards which every Hindu family had its own attitude of scepticism and apathy. "The institution of nunnery in Jainism and Buddhism and the instances of several grown-up maidens taking holy orders against their parents' desires, and some of them later falling from their high spiritual ideal, must have also strengthened the view of those who favoured marriages at about the time of puberty."[52]

In Vedic mythology it is stated that Soma, Gandhava and Agni are the earliest divine husbands of the bride, and her human husband is the fourth one. This idea was popularised in the period of the composition of the Purāṇas. The writers postulated that, at the time of the manifestation of the different signs of puberty, different divine husbands gain dominion over the girls. "Having signs, she is enjoyed by Soma ; having breast, she is enjoyed by Gandharvas and having menses, she is enjoyed by Agni."[53] *Gṛhyasana Graha* (quoted in the commentary on *Gobhila Gr.*, iii.4.6.) says much the same thing. This led to the widely canvassed myth that the girl must be married even before she develops any sign of womanhood. Varāhamihira, whose views have already been discussed, provides us with a simple, convincing logical and throught-provoking interpretation of the mythology mentioned above. He says, "The moon gave them [women] purity [cleanliness] ; Gandharva, culture and sweet speech ; the fire, the capacity to eat all sorts of food. Hence women are like unto pure gold."[54] Thus according to Varāhamihira, the great advocate of the high status of women, Soma, Gandharva and Agni do not enjoy and defile the girls but inculcate in them such virtues and qualities as purity, culture, etc., which enhance their prestige, honour and respect in society. In this way Soma, Gandharva and Agni are not the early husbands of the girl, but certain powers which help her to grow into an attractive, lovable and charming personality. As a criterion of the last resort, one must employ the common-sense approach to take this myth-making in one's stride and get it into prespective. Political or military occupation by alien conquerers did certainly serve to end an age of creative freedom for women and must have brought a great measure of intra-social insularity in its train, but in the changed circumstances, the onset of infantile sexuality was being used as an argument for early marriage. Varāhamihira is, however, more far-seeingly concerned to emphasize and preserve the especial role of Indian women as the bearers of the community's culture and as interlocutors in ontological dialogue. The Indian resparse conceived to deal with foreign conquest and proselytism tended perhaps to aggravate the problem and must have caused a certain measure of revulsion in outh against the institution of marriage itself. Again Varāhamihira shrewdly underlines the civilizing influence of marriage—even an unconscionably early one—using this myth of the celestial husbands. Since the woman of these times was expected to begule a goodly measure of her time by hersel, he wants to bring home to her the relation by which culture also binds her to society and to stress the otherness of nurture as a source of acculturation. Varāhamihira is using the advent of the celestial husbands in the life of the adoloscent girl to dispose of the cynical and hedonistic argument of early sexuality as a justification for child-marriage (the one would certainly be no cure for the other in any case) and rather to posit and symbolize the mythical intercourse as an induction, away from the confines of the home, into a larger dimension of social concerns and perspectives. This is of course to keep the telling argument from progeny to one side for the moment. But myths are myths. They have their own powers and field of influence. In the words of R.K. Mookerji, "Myths are by no means futile or fictitious as presumed by nineteenth-century historians ... Myths poetically and pregnantly embody traditions, values and aspirations of a people. They are conserved and transmitted by social memories and bind the present to the past in belief, thought and action." It may be stated again that the Maga Brāhmaṇas, the authors of this *Purāṇa*, did not follow Varāhamihira in this interpretation of his mythology, and followed the viws contained in the Vedic interpretation.

The general causes can now summed up : "Risely regards the custom as due primarily to hypergamy which, by limiting the choice of bridegrooms, impels parents to marry off their girls at the earliest age possible". "Gait regards infant marriage as the result of impact of Āryans and Dravidians and as a device to guard against pre-marital communism, and this again has possibly been a contributing factor." Campbell's opinion is "that early marriage was due to a belief in the danger of dying with unfulfilled wishes combined with the great wish of a Hindu to marry and have children".[56] Jolly observes that "the early marriage warrants the virginity of the bride".[57] "On the whole the insistence on marriage of girls and that at an early age, is a marked feature of the time and was probably mainly due to an anxiety to maintain their bodily purity."[58]

Divorce

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* enlarge the scope of divorce by stating that, "divorce is permissible when either party to the marriage is not pleased or some irritation has appeared among them".[59] These conditions prove lack of affection, understanding and adjustment between husband and wife, which are so vital for a peaceful and happy life. The non-physical, intellectual and emotional living together appeared to be practically useless and harmful and there was no sense in yoking together two such individuals for the simple reason that the marriage *saṁskāras* had been performed, which were indissoluble. Weight was attached not to the sanctity of the marriage tie but to the nature of the practical life in which the joys and sorrows f oliving together were shared.

According to Nārada "when husband and wife leave [one another from mutual dislike, it is a sin. He, however, recommends the expulsion of the wife not only on the grounds of wasteful expenditure, procuring abortion, adultery or attempt on the husband's life, but also for less serious offences like showing malice, making unkind speeches or eating before her husband. He asks the husband not to show love to a barren woman, or to one who gives birth to female children only, or whose conduct is blameable, or who constantly contradicts him. But it is doubtful where divorce is meant."[60]

The question of allowing divorce to a barren woman has also been discussed by many writers. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* recommends that a husband should wait for eight years for the birth of a child.[61] Kauṭilya (iii,2) also prescribes the same period. A.S. Altekar[62] raises the period : "Sufficient time, however, had to be allowed to pass in order to make it certain that the wife was really barren. Ten years at least had to elapse before barrenness could be presumed. In case daughters alone or very short-lived children were born, a further period of waiting for three or four years was prescribed." Baudhāyana enlarges the scope of divorce in such matters. He (ii. 6) recommends that a husband can abandon a wife if she does not beget children in the tenth year, or one who gives birth only to daughters in the twelfth, or one whose children die in the fifteenth, but her who is quarrelsome without any delay.

The divorced wife could not be left to herself or at the mercy of society. Lack of adjustment in married life and begetting only daughters were not entirely her fault. The leaders of society knew that, if such discarded women were not properly looked after, if no means of their sustenance were arranged, these would occasion a further decline in the standards of morality and that will we adding insult to the injury of such women. They thought that on humanitarani grounds, the abandoned members of tha society needed sympathetic treatment. The divorced women must lead a life of economic independence. For this purpose the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* recomends that "if, due to strained relations, divorce is given, the husband should give an allowance along with *strīdhana* to his wife".[63] Yājñavalkya (1.74) recommends that a husband should maintain a wife who has been divorced in the same way as before. If he does not do so, he would be guilty of great sin. Similarly, in Iranian society, a person who divorced his wife was compelled to return her personal property.[64] The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* maintains that people who do not return the personal property of the women break the promise of marriage. Manu prescribed a fine of 600 *paṇas* by the king in such cases.[65]

From the above discussion we can say that the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* took a lenient and sympathetic view of divorces. The return of *stridhana* has been recommended by several authors. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* maintains that it is also necessary for a maintenance allowance to be given to the wife by the husband. It is quite true that that the nature and the amount of maintenance allowance has not been stated. The practice prevalent in society must have determined the amount payable by the husband in each case.

Duties of Woman during Pregnancy

The woman, when pregnant was required to be cautious and careful in the matters of diet ad her movement. Extra hard work, an excessive diet, etc, were bound to effect the fetus. We know that a mather, as a teacher of the child, has been given the foremost position by the Hindu writers. The education of the child starts at the time of conception. So the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*[66] and the *Matsya Purāṇa* (vii, 40-49) have recommended some physical and psychological directions for the woman who is pregnant. She must avoid loud laughter, the company of evil persons, enmity, agitation and worries of all kinds. The things which instill fear must also be eschewed. Walking alone under a tree or gang to a lonely and deserted place or the crossing of a river may cause fear and thus affect the fetus. Constipation, which generally leads to several bodily ailments, should also be prevented. Bathing with scented water is recommended. This should gladden the heart of the mother and provide much needed relaxation to all the limbs of the body. She must keep herself busy in her role as teacher and in doing good actions by others. These will fill her mind with good thoughts. The idea behind these instructions is to keep her physically fit, mentally happy and relaxed and emotionally balanced.

Forms of Marriage

The usual eight-fold division of marriages is also set out in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. These are mentioned below :

1. Brāhma : In this form of marriage, the bride is properly adorned with ornaments and is given away to a bridegroom who is learned and comes of a noble family. He is specially invited for this purpose.

2. Daiva : This marriage is solemnized in the presence of a *ṛtvika* and during the course of a *yajña*. The bride wears jewels and other ornaments and is offered to a husband who is of good conduct.

3. Ārṣa : The bride's father receives a cow or a bull or two pairs of them and gives away his daughter to a person after the due performance of the rites.

4. Prājāpatya : Here the father of the bride gives his daughter to the person with away instructions that the couple should always remain united in the discharge of their religious duties.

5. Asura : In this form of marriage, the parents and the relatives of the daughter receive money and then give their daughter in marriage.

6. Gandharva : When both the parties fall in love and their marriage is consummated, it is known as the Gandharva form of marriage.

7. Rākṣasa : When a weeping and crying woman is forcibly abducted, it is known as Rākṣasa form of marriage.

8. Paiśāca : When a sleeping or an intoxicated girl is ravished, it is called paiśāca form of marriage.

Manu (III.27-34)[67] has also mentioned eight forms of marriages. These are :

1. Brāhma, where the father gives away the daughter, decked with ornaments and jewels, to a learned man of good conduct invited by him ;

2. Daiva, where the father gives his daughter, decked with ornaments, to a priest who duly officiates at a sacrifice, in the course of its performance ;

3. Ārṣa, where the father gives awav his daughter after receiving from the bridegroom a cow and a bull or two pairs of each animal.

4. Prājāpatya, where the father gives away his daughter after addressing the couple with the text : "May both of you perform your duties together" ;

5. Āsura, where the bridegroom receives a maiden after having given as much wealth as he can afford to her kinsmen and to the bride herself ;

6. Gāndharva, or the voluntary union of a maiden and her lover ;

7. Rākṣasa, or the forcible abduction of a maiden from her home ;

8. Paiśācha, where a man seduces a girl who is sleeping, intoxicated or disordered in intellect ;

It will be interesting to know the forms of marriages in Iran. "There seems to have been five forms of marriages : (i) The woman married with the consent of her parents ; the children which she bore her husband belonged to her in this world and the next ; she was called the *padheshahzan*, or 'privileged wife'. (ii) A wife who who was an only child was called the *ovagh-zan* or 'only-child-wife'. The first child which she bore was given to her parents to take the place of the daughter who had left the family ; after that, she became like the first, a 'privileged wife'. (iii) If a man of marriageable age died single, and his family gave a dowry to a strange woman and marrid her to a stranger, this woman was called the *sadhar-zan*, or 'adopted wife'. Half of her children belonged to the dead man, whose wife she would be in the next world, and the other half to the living husband.

(iv) A widow who married again was called a *chaghar-zan* or 'servant wife'. If she had no children by her first husband, she was considered an adopted wife, and half of her children by her second husband belonged to the first, whose wife she would be again in the next life. (v) The woman who married without her parents' consent was the least considered of all. She was called the *khud-sarai-zan*, the 'wife who had made her own house'. She could not inherit from her parents until her eldest son was of age and had given her as 'privileged wife' to his own father."[68] From this it becomes clear that the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* followed the Indian forms of marriages.

It is interesting to know that the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*[69] approve Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa forms of marriages by stating that the children of the first redeem and purify the souls of 10 past and future generations; of the second, seven generations; and of the third, three generations respectively. The Prājāpatya form of marriage is not mentioned in the *Bhavisya Purāṇa* in this connection. A.S. Altekar is of the opinion that "Brāhma and Prājāpatya are synonymous words and it is quite possible that the Brāhma marriage was originally identical with the Prājāpatya one."[70] This conclusion is supported by the fact that two of the early writers, Vaśiṣṭha and Āpastamba, do not mention Prājāpatya marriage at all; they refer only to three approved forms: Brāhma, Daiva and Ārṣa. Prājāpatya was added later, probably to make the number of the forms of marriage eight.

The authors of *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* condemn the sale of a girl. It is stated that the father of a girl should not receive money from the father of the bridegroom. If he did so, he would be called a "child-seller." "People who live on or wear clothes from the money received from their daughters, go to hell."[71] "Giving the girl in marriage after receiving a cow or a bull, is not without blame. One may take less or more, but it shall be known as the price of the girl."[72] The authors of the *Dharmaśāstras* also condemn the custom of a price for the bride. Baudhāyana maintains that the guardians, if they sell their daughters, will go to hell.[73] He also mentions that the purchased wife would not become a legal wife. The *Padma Purāṇa* states that the face of a person, who has sold his daughters, should not be seen.[74] Similarly Manu also condemns the sale of a girl.[75] The *Mahābhārata* mentions that a man who sells his daughter goes to hell (XIII.45.18). Of course, there is also a general *stūra* against selling any human being (*Gaut.* VII,14).[76]

Relations between Co-wives

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* have laid down instructions to govern relations between co-wives for maintaining a cordial atmosphere in the family.[77] There it is stated that the younger wife should regard the elder wife as her mother, show her motherly affection and treat her children with care. The former should offer things brought from her father's house first to the latter. This should make for due respect and regard which the elder wife deserves as of right and should not decline. If you such offers of goodwill are declined, they lead to mutual misunderstandings and jealousies, which can ruin the home. Before her husband, the younger wife should not belittle the importance of the elder but should give the impression that all the things are being done in the home according to her vishes. The elder wife should not be offended by the attentions the husband pays the younger one. She should regard the younger woman as her daughter and love her accordingly. Antipathy between co-wives is bound to arouse the displeasure of the husband.

Conclusion

To sum up, we can say that this *Purāṇa* gives a satisfactory, if not an eminently honourable position, to woman in society. To regard the husband as a god and serve him is the wife's primary duty; this is endorsed by almost all the writers. This *Purāṇa* does give her an effective and dominant position in domestic matters. Her position was further enhanced by the attribution of status according to which she is half part of her husband. In this way she is treated on a par with her husband and this assurance of equality runs through this mutual relationship. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* sufficiently enlarges the scope of divorce while other writers are reluctant to do so. The sanctity of marriage as an indissoluble tie, which bound the husband and the wife till their end, notwithstanding any strifes and tensions that might develop, held little authority for the authors of this *Purāṇa*. Thus both the wife and the husband have equal privelege in matter of divorce. The provision of the return of the whole *strīdhana* and of maintenance allowance for the divorcese proves beyond doubt that the authors were sensible of the farmer's personal predicament which could also become socially hazardons.

Nothing is said of women's education in this Purāṇa. Several prohibitions were imposed upon those whoseh usbands had gone abroad. A low age of marriage, as stated by other writers, has also been recommended by the *Bhavişya Purāṇa*. Keeping in view the conditions of the society of those times, the authors thought it appropriate to incorporate such materials in this *Purāṇa*. By such recommendations they did not mean any disrespect to woman. They also did not want that the position of the woman should be lowered in the eyes of others. Due to the fear of social ridicule, or because of their sincerity of motive and honesty of purpose, or due to the exigencies of time, the Maga Brāhmaṇas could not follow the liberal suggestions of Varāhmihira. Many useful instructions have been provided in this *Purāṇa* for pregnant ladies. This *Purāṇa* thus did great service to woman by giving liberal advice The usual eight fold classification of Indian marriages has been adopted in this *Purāṇa*. The sale of girls has been much condemned. This *Purāṇa* is quite conscious that the entry of a second wife in to the home might lead to discord and unhappiness. To maintain a happy and peaceful home it has been enjoined that the younger wife must defer in all matters to her senior. The elder wife has likewise been charged with a role of authority and responsibility. Attempts have been made to see that the reeationship between co-wives should be cordial in nature so that the home may be a place of joy and peace. Taken as a whole, the woman has been considered sympathetically and her position and status in home and society have been established and safeguarded in the *Bhavişya Purāṇa*.

NOTES

1. A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, ed. 1965, p. 339.
2. A. Chakravarty, "The Position of Women in Ancient India" *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. III, p. 212.
3. Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. V, p. 381.
4. F.C. Davar, *Iran and India through the Ages*, p. 27.
5. A.S. Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 345.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 347.
7. R.L. Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India*, ed. 1939, p. 285.
8. R.C. Hazra, *Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs*, ed. 1946, p. 212.

9. A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, ed. 1956, p. 210.
10. R. L. Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India* ed. 1939, p. 289.
11. *Sriṭikhaṇḍa*, 49.20.
12. R.C. Majumdar, "Social Condition,. *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p.564.
13. *Bhagavat Geta*, IX. 32.
14. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.11.1a.
    या पतिं दैवतं पश्येन्मनो वाक्काय कर्मभिः ।
15. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstras*, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 561-62.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 565.
17. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.11.1b.
    तच्छरीरार्धजातेव सर्वदा हितमाचरेत् ।।
18. *Ibid.*, IV, 171.4.
    जायमो यत्र पूज्यंते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।
    यत्रे तास्तु न पूज्यंते चिनंक्ष्य त्याशु तद्गृहम् ।।
19. *Mahābhārata*, "Ādiparvan", 74.40.
20. *Ibid.*., 74.50.
21. *Brahma-Vaivorta-Parāṇa*, 35, 119 and 127.
22. K.A.N. Shastri, *A Comprehensive History of India* ed. 1957, p. 478.
23. K.P. Jayaswal, *Manu and Yājñavalkya* ed. 1925, p. 232.
24. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* 1.10.1.
25. *Manu*, IX.III.
26. *Uttarakhaṇḍa*, 223, 36-37.
27. Indra, *The Status of Women in Hindu Religion*, p. 87.
28. U.N. Ghosal, "Social Condition", *The Struggle for Empire*, p. 481.
29. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.10.16-21.
30. Varāhamihira : *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* Eng. Translation by V.S. Shastri, 74.8.
31. *Ibid.*,
32. *Ibid.*, 74-11.
33. *Ibid.*, 74.4.
34. *Ibid.*, 74.10.
35. A.S. Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

37. Indra, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-8.

38. *op. cit.*,1.14.1.

प्रोषिते मंडनं स्त्रींणां पत्यौ मंगलमात्रकम् ।
निष्पादनं च यत्रेन तदारब्धस्य कर्मणः ।।

39. *Ibid.*, 1.14.6.

तत्रापि न चिरं तिष्ठेत्स्नानादीन्वापि नाचरेत् ।
यावदर्थं क्षणं स्थित्वा ततः शीघ्रं समाचरेत् ।।

40. A.S. Altkear, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

41. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.182.30.

सप्तवर्षा भवेद्गौरी दशवर्षा तु नग्निका ।
द्वादशे तु भवेतकन्या अत अध्वं रजस्वला ।।

42. *Ibid.*, 1.182.27.

गौरी कन्या प्रधानावे मध्यमा कन्यका स्मृता ।
रोहिणी तत्समा ज्ञेया अधमा तु रजस्वला ।।

43. *Aranya Kāṇḍa*, 47.10-11.

44. XIII. 44.14.

45. E.W. Hopkins, "The Growth of Law and Legal Institutions", *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I ed. 1962, p. 260.

46. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1. 182.24.

पितुर्गृहे तु या कन्या रजः पश्यत्य संस्कृता ।
पतंति पित्तरस्तस्य कन्या च वृषली भवेत् ।।

47. P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstras*, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 444-45.

48. J.J. Modis, "Marriage (Iranian)" *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 455.

49. Arthur Cristensen, *Iran under the Sassanids*, Urdu Trans. from French by Mohammad Iqbal, ed. 1941 ; p. 433.

50. R.C. Hazra, *Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs*, ed. 1940, p. 217.

51. Indra, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

52. A.S. Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

53. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.182.31.

व्यञ्जनेन समोपेतां सोमो भुङ्क्ते हि कन्याकाम् ।
पयोधरेषु गंधर्वा रजस्याग्निः प्रकीर्तितः ।।

54. Varāhamihira, *op.cit.*, 74.5.
55. R.K. Mookerji, *A History of Indian Civilisation* ed. 1961, p. 1.
56. Hutton, *Caste in India*, p. 137.
57. Jolly, *Hindu Law and Customs* ed. 1928, p. 119.
58. R.C. Majumder, *op.cit.*, p. 561.
59. *op. cit.*, 1.182.66.

परस्परस्य संवंधीन्मोक्षः स्त्रीपुंसयोः स्मृतः ।
न स्याद न्यतरः प्रीतो रोषात्सांप्रतिकादपि ॥

60. R. C. Majumder, *op. cit.*, p. 566.
61. *op. cit.*, 1.112.69 d.

आकांक्षे ताष्टवर्षाणी भर्तापि प्रसवंस्त्रियाः ॥

62. A.S. Altekar, *op. cit.*,
63. *op. cit.*, 1.182.67.

वाधते चेत्पतिभार्यां स तु द्वेष इति स्मृतः ।
वृत्तिराभरणं शुल्कं लाभश्च स्त्रीधनं भवेत् ॥

64. Arthur Christensen, *op. cit.*, p. 435.
65. *op. cit.*, 182.68a.

भोक्तुस्तु स्वय मेवेदं प्रतिज्ञाहननं भवेत् ।

66. *op. cit.*, 4.86. 23-32.
67. R.C. Majumder, *op. cit.*, p. 559.
68. Clement Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilisation*, p. 162.
69. *op. cit.*, 1.7.31-32.
70. A.S. Altaker *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.

न कन्यायः पिता विद्वान्गृह्णीयाच्छुल्करण्वपि ।
गृह्लन्हि शुल्कं लोभेन स्यान्नरोऽपत्यविक्रमी ॥
स्वाधनानि तुये मोहादुयजीवन्ति वान्धवाः ।
नारीयानानि वस्त्रं वा ते पापा चान्त्यधोगतिम् ॥

71. *op. cit.*, 1.7.39-40.

आर्षे गोमिथुनं शुल्कं केचिदाहुर्भृषैवतत् ।
अल्पो वापि महान्वापि विक्रयस्तावदेव सः ॥

72. *Ibid.*, 1.7.41.
73. *Dharmaśāstras* I.II. 20-21.
74. *Brahma Khaṇḍa*. 24,36.
75. *Manu Sṁṛti* III. 51.
76. E.W. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 260.
77. *op. cit.*, 1.14.9-32.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION

Introduction

Education received great recognition and was allowed much importance in the social organization of ancient India. The educational system helped considerably in the dissemination of knowledge and development of character. A living and affectionate relationship between the teacher and the taught, the pupil's study under the paternal guidance of the teacher, the observance of strict rules of conduct by the pupil, the wooded retreat of great scenic beauty in which the olden schools had their setting, all these and many more factors resulted in the inculcation and acquisition of real learning in ancient India. A status of mendicancy for the pupil who went out to the neighbouring town to receive alms from willing donors for himself and his *guru*, free board and lodge for the pupil in return for which he rendered personal services to the teacher made the latter humble and willing to learn. Besides formal study, recitation etc., he was instructed in the cultivation of good habits; decorum and etiquette, conduct according to ethical canons and the balanced development of the physical personality ; all these points received equal stress in the educational system. The pupil was rendered physically fit, mentally alert and spiritually elevated. The educational system produced eminent philosophers, poets, politicians, administrators, warriors, etc. The cultural heritage passed from one generation to another after being, refined and enriched. Thus even in those days, when means of transport were poor if not altogether non-existent, with the result that movement from one place to another was unthinkable and books unavailable, the sources of life and knowledge never dried up. Movements and ideas flowed from one place to another enriching the life of the people, though there were interspersed with short-lived periods of decadence also. This remarkable progress was entirely owing to a band of devoted teachers and pupils. The fundamental principles of education abstracted from the experience of these times have been summed up very beautifully as follows :

Verily, the goddess of learning (*Vidyā*) approached Brāhmaṇa

> saying : Protect me : I am thy treasure. Do not expound Me to the following unworthy persons : him who is jealous, who is wanting in simplicity and straightforwardness, or who is devoid of self-control. Then alone shall I be potent.
>
> One should honour him as a father and mother and should never bear ill-will towards the teacher who pierces the ears with [the needle of] Truth without causing pain but giving the boon of immortality by knowledge.
>
> Like teachers, who do not feed [but send away] unworthy pupils, who do not honour them, though possessed of the highest learning, by their word, thought and deed, knowledge also will shun them.
>
> In order to protect thy treasure, O Brāhmaṇa ! expound Me to him alone whom thou knowest to be pure, devoid of passion, possessed of intelligence, established in *brahmacarya*, the discipline of religious studentship [1]

Importance of Education

The importance of education has never been overestimated in ancient India. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* avers : "[As he is] the maker of Brahmā birth, the ruler of his own law the Brāhmaṇa, even a boy is duly the father of an old man".[2] Similarly Manu relates the story of a boy who taught his elder relatives and used to call them 'little ones'. The relatives approached the gods and complained about his audacity. The latter gave their decision in favour of the young boy. "A learned man, though young, has to be respected and honoured by virtue of his learning. (*Manu*. ii., 156 ; *Gaut*. vi. 21.23 ; *Yāj*. 1.115). If the Brāhmaṇas whose special duty was to teach, did not fulfild expectations, they will be of no use to society". "As an elephant of wood and a deer of leather are worthless, so a Brāhmaṇa is useless without education".[3] The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* recommend punishment by the king for the people of those villages where the Brāhmaṇas get food without reading Vedas and observing fasts.[4] We know that, during Vedic and later Vedic ages, *upanayana* was obligatory for the higher castes in the community. In all probability, therefore, the percentage of literacy was very high.

Duties of Pupils

Several writers have endorsed the general view that the pupils should stay with the teacher in his home from the beginning till the end of their educational career. "From *upanayana* to *Samāvartana saṁskāra* a pupil must receive education in the house of the *guru*."[5] The *Atharva-veda* (7,109.7) refers to this condition in the phrase, "if we have dwelt in studentship". It is also referred to in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (11.3.3,2) and in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (5.14). The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (2.23.1) uses the epithet for the student as *ācārya-kula-vāsin*. The direct and personal contact between the teacher and the taught provided a strong impetus for the development of the personality of the pupil. The teacher understood the student properly and the latter developed an attitude of reverence for the teacher so vital for effective and quick learning. In the words of R.K. Mookerji, "the pupil with his contact with the teacher is to imbibe the inward method of the teacher, the secret of his efficiency, the spirit of his life and work, and these things are too subtle to be taught."[6] The formative mind of the child which required emotional and intellectual development was to be placed in the charge of an expert who could teach and train him properly. The planned and congenial environments of the hermitage had a wholesome effect on the pupils belonging to different stations in life. They gained common experience under the paternal care of their teacher. The teacher, a spiritual father, was the real friend, philosopher and guide of the pupils.

Education through service had been the watch-word of ancient Indian education. Considerable emphasis was laid on its importance and utility. The pupils should sweep the house of the *guru*, bring water and firewood, tend cattle and perform such like duties.[7] "The student was expected to do personal service to the teacher like a son, suppliant or slave."[8] The *Mahābhārata* (5.36.52) maintains that no progress in education is possible without the service of the teacher. The Buddhist system of education did not lag behind in enjoining upon the pupils the importance of serving the teacher. They were expected to be polite in talk, polished in manners and refined in etiquette. "Describing the manner of the pupil waiting on his teacher in India in his time, I-tsing says [*Records*, pp. 117-120 quoted by Ghashal] : 'he goes to his teacher at the first watch or at the last watch in the night..., The pupil rubs the teacher's body, folds his clothes or sometimes sweeps the apartment of the yard. Then having examined water to see whether insects be in it, he gives it to the teacher. This is the manner in which one pays respect to one's superior. On the other hand, in case of a pupil's illness, his teacher himself nurses him, supplies all the medicine needed, and pays attention to him as if he were his child.' "[9] The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* draws a parallel when it states that "as we get water after digging a well so after serving a *guru* a pupil gets knowledege."[10]

Things Prohibited for Students

Student life was not a period of merry-making and enjoyment. It was a time of acquiring knowledge through disciplined training of mind and body. Study enabled him to discharge the duties of the remaining part of his life properly and efficiently. For the preparation of such a life, he must dispense with certain things like meat, liquor, garlands, juice, collyrium, oil on the body, shoes and umbrella. Dancing, music, gambling, the utterance of falsehood, speaking ill of others and the company of women were also to be avoided.[11] *Gautama Dharamasūtra* (II. 13, 14, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25) and *Manu Smṛti* (II. 198, 180, 181) also recommend the abandonement of such things like perfumes, garlands, shoes, an umbrella, a carriage and sleep during the day. Musical instruments and dance, etc. were forbidden as indeed were visits to gambling houses and festivals.

Such prohibitions, as described above, furthered the cause of education. In the words of R.K. Mookerji "the aim of education is *chitta-vṛtti-nirodha*, the inhibitions of those activities of the mind by which it gets connected with the world of matter and objects".[12] Such things undoubtedly distracted the attention of the pupils from the path of spiritual culture. The disturbing stimuli had to be suppressed if progress in the attainment of spiritual culture was to be made. Manu (2,88) also lays great emphasis on controlling the organs which run wild among attractive sensual objects: "Thus the inhibitions of the daily life necessitates the process of rationalisation, symbolisation and other kind of distortions must be rejected in the course of the spiritual culture."[13] In this way the individual's subjection to rigorous discipline led to the purge of all impurities and imperfections. It laid the foundation for a simple and good life so necessary for successful living.

Fees

The absence of fees in the educational system was a striking feature in ancient India. I the course of his studies a pupil was not expected to pay anything to the teacher. "After the completion of education a pupil could give a piece of land, cow, gold, house, umbrella, clothes, etc."[14] Gautama maintains that the pupil should give to the teacher whatever he can or ask the teacher what should be given to him, or if he is allowed to go without demanding anything the student should take the ceremonial bath.[15] *Āpastaṁba Dharamsutra* recommends the offer of the *dakṣinā* to the teacher at the end of the studies.[16] The money to be paid as *dakṣinā* should be earned in a rightful manner. If the teacher is in adverse circumstances, a fee got together even by begging from another person, whatever his easte, can be given to the teacher. The pupil can also render great service to the teacher but no boast should be made about it.

The offering of a nominal fee at the end of the educational career showed gratitude and reverence. It was difficult for the pupil to repay the services of the teacher in the form of certain things. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* praised Brahmavidyā by stating that the gifts of all the wealth in the world have less value than this *vidyā*. "The teacher and the pupil were not connected with each other by the 'cash nexus', but by the ties of spiritual relationship whereby both were repaying the debt they owed to the *ṛṣis* by the pursuit of knowledge."[17] The payment and receipt of fees were a hindrance in the development of respectful relations between the teacher and the taught. Money was no consideration in such matters. Various authors have condemned the sale of education. Manu (iii. 156), the *Mahābhārata* (Anusāsana Parvan 23.17) and Yājñavalkya (1.223) say that he, who is a hired teacher and who learns from such a teacher, are not fit to be asked to a *śrāddha* ceremony. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* (79.75-77) and Kālidāsa (*Mālavikāgnimitra* 1.17) also speak in the same strain.

Teacher : his qualifications

The success of any sound educational system depends upon the qualifications of a teacher. He holds the key position from which to effect the development of the children's personality. His sincerity and devotion, outlook and philosophy of life are bound to affect them considerably. "He[Guru] takes the form of [the] super ego".[18] Let thy preceptor be to thee like unto a God (teacher's farewell address to the pupils). His intellectual and moral qualities have been well explained by different authors. *Āpastamba* (i.1.1.12-17) says, "A teacher is a person who is sincere in following the law, and this profession comes to him through heredity". The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (1,2,3) stresses the spiritual qualities of the teacher when it states that a pupil should approach a *guru* fuel in hand, as he completely dwells in Brahman. The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (vii, 4) enjoins upon the teacher by stating that he should teach whole-heartedly. *Āpastamba* (1.2.8.25-28) lays down that a teacher should regard his pupils as his sons and teach them all that he knows. Only in the time of distress may he obstruct their study. A teacher fails to be a teacher if he does not teach. Droṇa of the *Mahābhārata* (50-21) curses those teachers who fail to do their duties stating that, if a teacher does not teach his pupils for a year, the former receives all the sins of the pupils. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* sums up very beautifully the qualities of the teacher. "A *guru*, who knows the true meaning of Gāyatrī and devoutly follows the law (*Maryādā*), is the best of all."[19] The knowledge of the true meaning of Gāyatrī refers to his spiritual attainments and the following of the Maryādā of the *śāstras* refers to his cultural attainments. Why the Gāyatrī verse came to be famous is difficult to say. Its fame was probably due to its grand simplicity and to its adaptability to an idealistic conception of the world as emanating from an all-pervading Intelligence."[20] The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* thus lays equal emphasis on sacred and secular knowledge of the teacher which was passed on to pupils through this system of education.

Kind of Teachers

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions five kinds of teachers. They are : (1) Ācārya, (2) Upādhyāya, (3) Guru, (4) Ṛtivga, and (5) Mahāguru.

1. Ācārya. According to the Lexicon of Amara Singh, an Ācārya is one who himself is capable of expounding the hymns of the Vedas. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions that an Ācārya is one who teaches the secret (*kalpa*) of the Vedas.[21] The Ācārya is defined by Manu (ii. 14-f) as a person who teaches the Vedas together with the *kalpa.* According to Viṣṇu, Ācārya is a teacher who teaches a branch of the Vedas. Vaśiṣṭha (iii,26) maintains that an Ācārya must teach all the Vedas. Patañjali uses four terms to indicate a teacher, and he regards Ācārya as a teacher of the highest type, an original thinker and a master like Pāṇini. Gautama (1.90) maintains that the teacher from whom the pupils receivies the *upanayana* sacrament is called an Ācārya.

2. Upādhyāya. According to *Amarakoṣa, Upādhyāya* is one who himself discourses on knowledge. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* states that he who teaches the Vedas for earning a livlihood is called an Upādhyāya.[22] According to Vaśiṣṭha (iii.21) one who teaches only a portion of the Vedas is called an Upādhyāya. Manu (2.141) and Viṣṇu

(xxiv.2) regard Upādhyāya as a person who teaches for fees for making both ends meet. Upādhyāya, who was previously called an Adhyāpaka, was entrusted with the teaching of secular and scientific treatises.[23]

It appears that, due to the emergence of new disciplines and the consequent growth in secular and scientific literature, the old teacher i.e. Ācārya, could not himself teach all these subjects. Hence for the teaching of these branches, a new class of teachers styled as Upādhyāyas, were called into being. These teachers taught the pupils for a fee. It is quite true that the sale of education, or teaching for the sake of fees has been condemned as stated above. But it appears that such condemnation applied to the Ācārya who taught the sacred knowledge which was regarded pure and high. Charging of fees by the Upādhyāya for his teaching was permitted if the subject-matter to be taught was different from the sacred lore. "A pupil was placed in the charge of two supervisors qualified by learning, character and standing, who were called Ācārya and Upādhyāya." Their functions are described in Mahāvagga (1.25-33). The distinction seems to be that the Upādhyāya was the higher authority entrusted with the duty of instructing the young *bhikṣu* in the sacred texts of the doctrine, while the Ācārya assumed responsibility for his conduct. According to Buddhaghoṣa commenting on Mahāvagga (5,4,2) the Upādhyāya is to be of ten years' and the Ācārya of six years' training. But, of course, mere seniority is not a qualification unless the monk was also learned and competent."[24] But in the Brāhmiṇical system of education, the position of the Ācārya is greater than that of the Upādhyāya.

It appears that, in the Buddhist system of education, the Ācārya assumed the responsibility of imparting instruction in sacred matters to the pupils while the Upādhyāya owed responsibility for the discipline and conduct of the pupils. In this way the practical and theoretical aspects of education were separated and brought under the charge of two different kinds of teachers. The position of the Upādhyāya, the person in charge of the practical aspects of the monks' education, was regarded as superior to that of the Ācārya as Buddhism laid more emphasis on contemplation, concentration, and the development of the ethical virtues of the individual. A strict code of conduct, the subjugation of evil desires and the development of the moral qualities were more important than the acquisition of formal instruction in Buddhism. Hence Upādhyāya ranked higher than the Ācārya.

3. Guru. The third kind of teacher, according to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, is called a *guru* who is defined as follows : "He who performs *garbhādhāna saṁskāra* and provides food, is called a *guru.*[25] The *guru* here represents the father. Yājñavalkya (1.34) also mentions that a *guru* is one who performs *saṁskāras* and imparts instruction in the Vedas. Originally the father himself taught the child, and so he was called the *guru.*"

4. Ṛtvija.[26] "He, who performs *agnistoma* Yajña knowing well its meaning, is called a Ṛtvija".[27] Jaimini (1.2.28) regards this kind of teacher in terms of a priest. In the words of P.V. Kane "Ṛtvijs were engaged at solemn *śrauta* sacrifices or at domestic rites and ceremonies."[28] "Ṛitvik is a regular term for a 'sacrificial priest', covering all the different kinds of priests employed at the sacrifice. It appears certain that many priests were Brāhmaṇas."[29] It is evident that, with the growth in sacred literature and emphasis on the ritualistic aspect of religion, their subject-matter became extremely vast and it needed the services of a separate teacher who could devote his time fully to the rites. "Their function undoubtedly represents a later state of the ritual, the development of the elaborate series of sacrificial calls on the one hand, and on the other, the use of long hyms addressed to the *soma* plant."[30] These rituals and rites had a special appeal for the masses and were a powerful means to propitiate their deities and to receive rewards in return.

5. Mahāguru. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* regards him as the best of all teachers. It says ; "He is the teacher of teachers. His only learning is the recitation of the name of God. He should study the eighteen Purāṇas, the *Rāmāyana*, the *Mahābhārata*, the cults of Viṣṇu, Sun, Śiva, etc. He is to be worshipped by all."[31] It appears that the two Epics, all the Purāṇas and the cults of different gods had assumed a holy and sacred position in society, and therefore, a person, who had studied all these texts, ranked as the foremost teacher.

Conclusion

The educational data, as gleaned from *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentioned above, are imperfect. Nothing is stated about the courses of study, different grades of schools, women's education, the life-long scholars, primary or higher education; centres of education, the daily routine of the pupils, methods of teaching, etc. Considerable emphasis has been laid on the duties of the pupils. Such duties were helpful in making their lives simple and austere. They translated the maxim 'simple living and high thinking' into real life. The non-payment of fees added an air of sanctity and seriousness to the relationship between the teacher and the taught. The imparting and receiving of education was not a commercial affair but a partnership in spiritual endeavour. The prohibitions, physical and mental, imposed on the pupils during their studies, gave them a chance to have a harder life devoid of pleasures and enjoyments which were regarded as distracting. The student's life was considered a preparation in which he was expected to subjugate his passions and enhance his inner worth so that he may prove equal to the responsibilities of the remaining part of his life. The five kinds of teachers and their qualifications were indicated, and their duties in the context of a growing need for education set out. However, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* gives us additional information about the grades of teachers, their method of working, and their relationship with the taught. In particular it seems to be very emphatic about the obligations of the Brāhmaṇas to study and teach and even goes to the extent of prescribing that a Brāhmaṇa failing in the discharge of his duties is not entitled to a maintenance from state or society. Besides this, the Purāṇa adumbrates sound ideals of education and the ways by which it can contribute to social well-being.

NOTES

1. R.K. Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education : Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist*, ed. 1951, pp. 37-38.
2. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.4. 92b.
   बालोऽपि विप्रो वृद्धस्य पिता भवति धर्मतः ।।
3. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1.4.101.
   यथा काष्ठभयो हस्ती यथा चर्ममयो मृगः ।
   यश्च विप्रोनधीयान स्त्रयस्ते नाम विभ्राति ।।
4. *Ibid.*, 1.4.105.
   अव्रता ह्यनधीयाना पत्र भैक्षचरां द्विजाः ।
   तं ग्रामं दंडयद्राजा चारेभक्त प्रदोहि सः ।।
5. *Ibid.*, 1.4.36.
   आसमावर्तनात्कर्या, त्कृतोपनयनो द्विजः ।
   आचार्यपुत्र शुश्रूषां ज्ञानदो धार्मिकः शुचिः ।।

6. R.K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, Prologue p. xxvi.
7. *Ibid.*, Prologue, p. xxix.
8. A.S. Altekar, *Education in Ancient India* ed. 1957, p. 60.
9. U.N. Ghoshal, Education, "*The Classical Age*", pp. 584-85.
10. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.4.187.
   यथा खन्नखनित्रेण जलमाप्नोति मानवः ।
   तथा गुरुगतां विद्यां शुश्रूषुराधिगच्छति ॥
11. *Ibid.*, 1.4,146-51.
12. R.K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, Prologue, p. xxii.
13. *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.
14. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.4.215.
   क्षेत्रं हिरण्यं गामश्चं छत्रोपान हमेव च ।
   धान्यं वासांसि शाकं वा गुरवे प्रीतमाहरेत् ॥
15. *Gautama Dharmasūtrā*, II. 54-55.
16. 1.2.7.19-23.
17. R.K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, p. 202.
18. *Ibid.*, Prologue, p. xxviii.
19. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* 1.4.46.
20. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra,* Vol. II, Part I, p. 303.
21. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.4.74.
   सरहस्यं सकल्पं च वेदं भरतसत्तम ।
   तमाचार्यं महाबाहो प्रवंदंति मनीषिणः ॥
22. *Ibid.*, 1.4.75.
   एकदेशं तु वेदस्य वेदांगान्यापि वा पुनः ।
   योऽध्यापयति वृत्त्यर्थमुपाध्यायः स उच्यते ॥
23. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇinī*, ed. 1953, p. 283.
24. R.K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, p. 402.
25. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.4.76.
   निषेकादीनि कार्याणि यः करोति नृपोत्तम ।
   अध्यापयति चान्येन स विप्रो गुरुरुच्यते् ॥
26. *Yāgñvalkya*, 1.35.
   ऋत्विग्यज्ञकृदुच्यतो ।

27. *Ibid.*, 1.4.77.

    अग्न्याधेयं पाक यज्ञानग्निष्टोभादिकान्यखान ।
    यः करोति वृतो यस्य स तस्यार्त्वेकिहोच्यते ।।

28. *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. II, Part I, p. 109.
29. A.A. Macdonell and A.B. Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I ed. 1958, p. 112.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
31. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1.4.86-87.

CHAPTER VII

FASTS AND GIFTS

Introduction

In ancient India religion was an important factor in the life of the people. The social, economic and political life of the country, nay, the whole gamut of life was charged with religion. In the words of Sir Monier Williams "religion is ever present to a Hindu mind. It colours all ideas. It runs through every fibre of his being. It is the very alpha and omega of his whole earthly career. He is born religious and dies religious, he is religious in the eating and drinking, in his sleeping and waking, in his dressing and undressing, in his rising up and sitting down, in his work and amusement. Nay, religion attends to him in his antenatal ceremonies long before his birth and follows him in endless offerings for the good of soul long after death."[1]

Different periods of Indian history elicited different thoughts and practices in the field of religion. During the Vedic age the people worshipped all manner of deities, who represented different powers of nature. These deities were propitiated with ceremonies and rituals. The Upaniṣadic age witnessed the emergence of the highest philosophy and religion. Their chief emphasis was on knowledge, intuition, *yoga*, etc. The ceremonial religion, preached in the Vedic age as a means of attaining the highest knowledge, began to be looked with disfavour in the Upaniṣadic age. Buddha enlarged, ennobled, systematised and emphasised the ethical doctrines. He focussed the attention of the people on the purity of thoughts, actions and words, the practice of the eight-fold path and the understanding of the four noble truths. Similarly, Jainism laid great emphasis on the development of the moral side of the individual. During the Gupta age we find the emergence of a new kind of religion, called the Purāṇic religion. This religion, which appealed to the masses, preached sectarian views based on the existence of different gods. Its chief emphasis lay on devotion. Fasts and gifts were given a very prominent place in it.

Fasts : a brief history

Fasts have been discussed in the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, epics, Sūtras, Purāṇas and many other texts. The opinions of those who deal with the subject differ considerably with regard to the derivation and meaning of this word. It is due to the fact that the writers belonged to different ages and interpreted its meaning according to their needs and the usage of the times. In St. Petersburg dictionary the important meanings of the word given are : 1. will, command, law, prescribed order ; 2. subservience, obedience, service ; 3. domain ; 4. order, regulated succession, realm ; 5. calling, office, customary activity : carrying on of, custom ; 6. religious duty, worship, obligation, 7. any undertaking religious or ascetic performance or observance, vow, sacred work ; 8. vow in general, fixed purpose; 9. other specialized senses.[2]

The meanings of the word *vrata*, mentioned above, can be divided into two categories—religious and secular. The first four categories directly come under secular fasts and the last five under religious fasts. In the early period when religion tended spontaneously to be more social than personal, there was hardly any distinction between the religious and other aspects of life. Hence the term "fast" was used in a comprehensive sense including all manner of legal and moral restraints.

As time passed on, the spiritual and secular duties came to be differentiated. With the establishment of monarchies as a deliberately conceived and distinctive form of Government, the king's duties increased. Politics came to be regarded as a branch of knowledge separate from religion. The progressive division of social functions and specialisation also led to a measure of demarcation between legal restraint and moral continence. The distinctive spheres of activities of the emergent social classes and areas of influence left their impress on the content of the term 'fast'. The Brāhmins used the word fast in two senses ; 1. a course of pattern of behaviour appropriate to a person in a social situation; 2. and an *upavāsa*. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* uses the word fast in the sense of *upavāsa*.[3] The same meaning is connoted in the *Gṛhyasūtras* and *Dharmasūtras*. The *Parāśara Gṛhyasūtra* (II.8) maintains that a *snātaka* must observe certain rules for three days after *samāvartana*. These observances are abstention from meals, avoidance of earthen vessels for drinking water, of seeing women, śūdras, corpses and crows, not passing urine, not spitting before the sun, etc. All these observances are not required however, if the individual does no more than just speak the truth. The *Āpastaṁba Dharamasūtra* enjoining upon the couple the observance of certain rules from the day of their marriage.[4] The husband and wife should eat only twice a day, should not overeat at any meal and must keep fasts on *parvan* days. Similar meanings have been assigned to *vratas* in the *Mahābhārata*. Śabara on Jaimini Sutras concludes by saying "a *vrata* means an activity of mind, which is a resolve in the form of 'I shall not do this'."[5] He gives an example by stating that one should not behold the rising or the setting sun. The *Vrata Prakāśa* defines *vrata* as "a special resolve concerning what is well known to the learned, just as *mantras* are those that are well known among the learned as *mantras*."[6]

From this discussion in which each protagonist chooses his own etymology for the word *vrata* and invests it with a prescriptive content after his own persuasion, it becomes clear that sectarianism had entered into the word *vrata*, its meaning and observance. The old definitions were discarded and the interpretation of Śabara and the *Vrata Prakāśa*, mentioned above, came to be accepted by a majority of the people. According to P.V. Kane,[7] "Its principal meaning from at least the first century of the Christian era onwards has been that of a religious undertaking, or vow, observed on a certain *tithi*, week day, month or other period, for securing some desired object by the worship of a deity, usually accompanied by restrictions as to food and behaviour."

Rules for a Vrata

A *vrata* should be observed with implicitly and all seriousness. The *vratas* go in vain if these are followed half-heartedly. The physical and mental activities of the person must fall in line with the importance of a *vrata*. The *Agni Purāṇa* speaks of ten virtues that must be cultivated as common to all *vratas*, *viz.*, "forbearance, truthfulness, compassion, charity, purity [of body and mind], curbing the organs of senses, worship of deities [or images] offering into fire, satisfaction and not depriving another of his belonging".[8] Devala observes "...celibacy, purity, truthfulness and the giving up of eating meat—these four should be regarded as the highest virtues to be observed in all the *vratas*." The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* lays considerable emphasis at more than one place on the preliminaries to be fulfilled before a *vrata* could be observed. These are rising early, cleaning one's teeth, taking a bath, worshipping the idol with offerings of flowers, fruit, incense, food, etc. The Brāhmaṇas should be given offerings and things to eat. The observance of silence, the control of anger and the passions are also recommended for the duration of that day. Such *vidhis* have for their objective the attainment of external and internal purity and the curbing of evil tendencies. The observance must proceed from a sense of religious fervour even if the *vratas* were meant only for the fulfilment of desires.

Praise of Vratas

The authors of various Purāṇas have utilised their talents to the utmost in speaking the praise of *vratas*. All heavenly pleasures and worldly desires can be gained through them. It would appear that they are a veritable magic wand which can achieve anything and everything. All human cravings and desires, physical, mental, moral and spiritual could be fulfilled through them. The *Brāhma Purāṇa* says : "The reward that is secured by the worship of Sun for only one day cannot be secured by hundreds of Vedic sacrifices or by Brāhmaṇas to whom the fees are paid..."[9] "The ocean of hell can be crossed by boats in the form of *vratas* and *upavāsas*".[10] *Vratas* are the passport to heaven. These are the unfailing remedies and panacea for all the ills attaching to the moral *persona*. The *Garuḍa Purāṇa*, quoted by Hemādri, states that "the Kañchanapuri *vrata* described by it, is more purifying than even the Gaṇgā, Kurukṣetra, Kāśī and Puṣkara".[11] About the Ubhayadvādaśī *vrata* described in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, it is said that "the sanctity of Gayā, Puṣkara, Vārāṇasī, Prayāga or other holy places situated in the east, west or north is not superior or equal to that *vrata*". Thus the observance of a single *vrata* could easily bestow on the devotees the rewards gained by a sacred bath or by a visit to a sacred place. Similarly the *Padma Purāṇa* extrols Jayanti *vrata* by mentioning that, in the body of a man, who performs it, all holy places and gods reside.[12] It appears that the various authorities on *vratas* vied with one another in offering rewards to the devout. The *Mahābhārata*, "Anuśāsana Parvan," allots the most exalted place to *vratas* when it declares that there is no higher *tapas* than an *upavāsa* and none equal to it.[13] Poor people can secure the rewards that can be had from sacrifices by accepting the austerities prescribed in the *vratas*. Some of them have been credited with the power to drive away all kinds of fears. The Tilaka *vrata* described in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (IV.12.1) states that all enemies, bhūtas, pretas and paiśāchas return without harming an individual, when they see the *tilaka* on his forehead. The *vratas* have the potential power to summon and bring back the memories of one's past lives. Jātismara *vrata* described in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (IV.13) tells of an individual who recalled his past life simply by observing this *vrata*. Various Purāṇas describe in numerous passages the worldly ends which individuals attain to through these *vratas*. The *Agni Purāṇa* states that *dharma*, progeny, wealth, beauty, good fortune, virtue, fame, learning, longevity, purity, enjoyment of pleasures, heaven : this is a list of what one may hope for by a simple act of piety contained in a *vrata*. "The *Liṅga Purāṇa* (Purvārdha, 83.4) maintains that an individual, who for one year eats only once in the evening (*nakta*) and worships Śiva on 8th and 14th in each *pakṣa*, secures the rewards that can be gained through sacrifices. The devotee also attains the highest goal. The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* have simplified the procedure prescribed for *vratas*. "A person who listens to the *vidhi* of Rasakalyāṇī *vrata* and exhorts others to do likewise reaches the abode of Pārvati."[15] A person who listens to Ardaṇandakāri *tṛtīyā vrata* and persuaded others to do the same reaches the abode of Indra.[16] An individual is redeemed from all sins if he listens to the *vidhis* of the *vratas* (Mandāra ṣaṣṭhī) and exhorts others to follow it.[17]

It was also possible that a person due to unavoidable circumstances might not be able to complete a particular *vrata*. In this way he ran the risk of displeasing the god or gods to whom the devotion was addressed. Such situations have been ably provided for by the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. They recommend the performance of a *vrata* which can help in the fruition of an uncompleted *vrata*. The Akhaṇḍa-dvādaśī *vrata* mentioned in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* serves such purposes.

Their popularity

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, like other Purāṇas, pressed into service the effective device of stories to popularise *vratas*. Many interesting stories from mythology were invented by them to commend the efficacy of *vratas* to common people. "The reorganisers of the Paurāṇic religion increased their number, spread them evenly over the whole year and invested them with a moral fervour by associating a number of ethical and edifying stories with them."[18] Their authority generally remained beyond question, outside the pale of controversy. The stories spread from place to place and with them went the *vratas*, the supremacy of Brāhmaṇas, their mythology, religion, customs, rituals, etc. Two of the many stories told in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* show how Purāṇic lore sought to promote the value of the *vratas* and the efficacy of the idea of a simple, devout life that went with it.

In the city of Mithilā, lived a woman named Ūrmilā. A series of misfortunes had made her unhappy and her life miserable. So she went to Avantī with her son and daughter. She stayed in the house of a Brāhmaṇa whom she worked for to make both ends meet. Once, compelled by circumstances, she stole wheat from her master's house to feed her hungry children. Some years later her daughter named Śyāmalā grew up and became a young girl. She was extremely beautiful. Dharmarāja accepted the girl as his wife and Ūrmilā died soon after. Dharmarāja had advised his wife, Śyāmalā, specially not to unlock the doors of seven rooms in the house. He also instructed her not to enter those rooms. She agreed. But she soon became seized with an irrepressible curiosity about them. One day when Dharmarāja was away at work, she opened one of the rooms. To her utter surprise she found that her mother was being forced into cauldrons brimming with hot oil, by the messengers of Yama. She could not tolerate the sight and shut the door. She opened the second door and found that her mother was being pulverized on a grindstone. In the third room nails were being driven into her forehead. In a fourth, terrible and cruel dogs tore off flesh from her living body and were gobbling it up. In to whichever room she went, she was confronted by these awesome tortures inflicted on her mother. Her mother was undergoing the most fearful punishment of hell and Śyāmalā herself could do nothing about it but look on. She reflected on how it came about that her mother was being punished so mercilessly. After all, what *was* her sin ? She approached her husband, confessed her disregard of his advice and asked about her mother. Dharmarāja replied, "Well I advised you not to open those doors. Your mother's condition is the result of her sin ; she stole some grains of wheat from the house of a Brāhmaṇa and gave them to you to eat. He who steals from the house of a Brāhmaṇa shall undergo torments in hell as long as the sun and moon last." To this Śyāmalā replied, "I know all that. Please tell me a way to relieve my mother from all this pain and agony". Dharmarāja thought it over and said, "In your previous birth you observed Buddhāṣṭamī *vrata*, The reward of that *vrata* has not yet been exhausted. It is still with you. If you would transfer this reward to your mother, she can come out of hell." As a devoted daughter she agreed to the suggestion with alacrity and the same was done. The mother came out of hell. It was the miracle of the *vrata* that she got a beautiful form in her renewal and reached heaven thereafter. The story concludes with the salubrious moral that the mother still resides there.

Here is how, the second story goes. In ancient times a Vaiśya named, Śīlabhadra, lived in Vidiśā. He was extermely attached to his children, money, etc. Also, he was always thoughtful about their well-being. In spite of his enormous riches, he neither gave gifts to Brāhmaṇas nor worshipped the gods. In course of time he died and his *preta* or corpse was left on the bank of Vetrāvatī river. One day a Brāhmaṇa saw him roasting on the summer sand. The latter was crying with extreme thirst as also because of heat boils. The Brāhmaṇa took pity on him for the torments of his living hell and enquired about his previous life. If dead men could speak, this one did. He said "I did not perform any good deed in my past life. I always worked for the betterment of my life and children. I am now in this horrible condition, because I did not do any good to anybody. I endured the sufferings of heat and cold for my children only. I earned money through injustice. I am suffering for it all while others are enjoying life. This painful thought haunts me unceasingly". After stating this, the *preta*, in a very humble tone, requested the Brāhmaṇa to show him a way out of that dreadful torment. The Brāhmaṇa took pity on him and said : "Ten years back I observed Sukra-dvādaśī *vrata*. The rewards of this *vrata* have not yet been exhausted. I can transfer that to you and that should redeem you." The *preta* was delivered from its sufferings and attained *mokṣa.*

Conclusion

Buddhism and Jainism, the two powerful challenges to Brāhminism, raised their voice against the ceremonial religion of the Brāhmins. The latter, who had long enjoyed unchallenged authority over the people, did not take the opposition lightly. They found that these two religions were opening the gates of *mokṣa* through a stern discipline of mind and body. A majority of the people started thinking in terms of the cessation of life and perpetual bliss. The Brāhmaṇas thought of a powerful and effective means to retrieve the situation. They glorified the uses of *vratas*. All manner of worldly and other-worldly rewards were promised to the people if they would observe the different *vratas*. "Buddhism and Jainism were influential rivals of the ancient sacrificial system. In order to wean common people from those schisms, it is very probable that the learned followers of the Vedic system hit upon the glorification of the *vratas* and promised heaven and other-worldly and spiritual rewards to those who preformed *vratas* that were comparatively easy and within reach of all..."[19] Thus attempts were made by the Brāhmaṇas to check the rush of heretical or heterodox ideas by this clever device. People found a new, simple and easy way to satisfy their religious and spiritual longings.

Due to the attacks of these two religions, the economic conditions of the Brāhmaṇas suffered a set-back. They had so far fed themselves and their families on the offerings which they got from the houses of their devotees after performing many sacrifices and rituals. It was obligatory for the devotee to offer food, clothes, and money at the conclusion of sacrifices. Thus the Brāhmaṇas were successful to a considerable extent in enlisting the active belief of the masses of the people. Abuse was partly inherent in the system and they popularised the *vratas* for ameliorating their own economic condition.

All *vratas* had been declared sacred and ancient. This added to their importance in the eyes of the people and fostered the impression that it was a discovery. The antiquity of the *vratas* made them more reliable and authoritative. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and others too, commended the *vratas* as originating from *ṛṣis* and gods who had recommended them for the attainment of desired objectives. The association of gods and *ṛṣis*, who were universally respected and honoured, with the *vratas* added to their sanctity. The Brahmins, who formulated the different *vratas*, created the impression among the people that, they were only recommending what had already been done by the great and by the divine. The Brāhmins thus contrived to remain innocent in the eyes of the people. Doing nothing, they did everything.

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* have recommended a large number of *vratas* exclusively for women. The ignorant women found in them an easy and potent means for the fulfilment of their desires. "Most of the women in society at this time were uneducated, and, therefore incapable of understanding subtle intellectual arguments like those advanced by the Vedanta school. The new religion, however, mostly relied on appeal to faith and devotion. It, therefore, appealed to women immensely."[20] Even today women perform religious rites, *vratas*, etc., with greater devotion than men. Thus women have played a notable part in conserving and perpetuating the rituals and traditions of the Brāhminical religion.

A majority of the *vratas* were meant for the householders who wanted progeny, health, wealth, worldly possessions, etc. The *vratas* thus indirectly popularised and strengthened Varṇāśrama-dharma. Buddhism, which believed in the universality of pain and the willed cessation of life, tried to create a distaste for family life on which the economic stability and religious supremacy of the Brāhmaṇas rested. That was a great challenge to them. Through *vratas* the Brāhmaṇas recreated love for this life and the possessions of the world which could be attained by following them. "This [*vrata*] subject was developed both by the Bhāgavatas and the Pāsupata Śaivas as a positive prescription for the householder desiring health, beauty, life, wealth, success in this life and *mukti* afterwards."[21]

The vast number of the *vratas*, mentioned in different texts, prove their growing importance during these times and the faith and belief of the people in their efficacy. "The bulk of the *vratas* practised in medieval and modern times are *kāmya*, i.e., performed for the purpose of securing some object in this world or sometimes the next world or both. Most of the *vratas* are really secular though under the garb of religion and, through certain disciplines (such as fast, worship, celibacy, truthfulness,) have to be observed, breathe a frankly materialistic attitude ; they are meant to appeal to the ordinary human cravings that rule the whole world."[22]

Vratas helped in preserving and communicating the religious and cultural traditions from one generation to another. This helped society to a considerable extent in keeping up its homogeneity and internal cohesion. The geographical and the cultural unity of India thus ruled as a living force. The sanctity of rivers and holy places all over the country, which had become places of great repair, and the worship and popularity of the gods, belonging to an all but universal religion, the stories connected with ṛṣis and great persons, the common *vidhis* and a common pattern of observances and *vratas* which were laid down and accepted as such helped in fostering that unity. "Geographically, the whole of India is brought daily into the cults and faiths of the people, into their ritual ablutions and worship by hymns and prayers and periodically by the institution of pilgrimages to sacred cities, rivers, lakes and mountains and the principal temples of gods and goddesses distributed in every part of the land."[23]

Gifts

Definition of Gifts

Different texts define gifts variously. "*Dāna* consists in the abandonment of one's ownership over a thing and creating the ownership of another over that thing. This happens when the latter willingly accepts the thing."[24] Devala states that, when wealth is given to an individual keeping in view the rites of *śāstras*, it is known as a gift. The person who receives the *dāna* should be a fit person as defined in the *śāstras*. Dharmadāna, according to Devala, is given without expectation of reward. The *Dānamakhya* p.3 explains that the definition of the *dāna* given by Devala applies to the best kind which can be called a *sāttvika dāna* and not just any *dāna*. The *Bhagavat Gītā* divides *dānas* into three kinds, *sāttvika*, *rājasa* and *tāmasa* and defines them as follows.[25]

The gift which is made to one who does nothing in return, with the idea that it is one's duty to give, and with due regard to the place, time, and recipient of the gift, is said to be *sāttvika* ; the gift, however, which is made in a grudging mood, with the object of getting some service in return, or with a view to gain, is said to be *rājasa* ; the gift which is made at an improper place and time and in a disrespectful and insulting manner to undeserving persons is said to be *tāmasic*. The *Taittiriya Saṁhitā* states that it is called *tapas* when a man makes a gift of what he owns.[26]

Necessity of Gifts

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* took considerable pains to explain the necessity of different types of gifts. "Money is never wasted when it is used and given in gifts. It is wasted when the past good actions are exhausted."[27] "After death one has no hold over his property. The best thing is togive away gifts with one's own hand during [one's] lifetime."[28] The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* makes a direct appeal when it asks : "What is the use of having a healthy body and long life, if we do not devote our lives to doing good to others?"[29] "Money is earned with hard work in this life. The proper use of money is the giving of gifts."[30] Curses and misfortunes were in store for those who neither gave gifts, nor performed *havanas*, nor died at a sacred place, nor gave gold, clothes, food, water, etc. to Brāhmaṇas. "They remain always and in all births, sick, hungry, unclothed and carry a begging bowl in their hands."[31]

Praises of Gifts

As in the matter of *vratas*, the writers on gifts have promised untold blessings to the persons who do give gifts. All their worldly and heavenly desires could be brought to fruition through them. In the *Ṛg-veda* (1.125) we find that gifts made by the King Svanaya, son of Bhavayavya, to Kāksīvat, are highly praised, and the subject-matter of *dāna* in general is eulogised in verses 5-7. In the *Ṛg-veda* (1.126.3) Kāksīvat mentions that he received 60,000 cows from Svanaya along with 10 chariots with young girls seated in them, to which four horses were yoked. A reference is found in the same Veda to the gifts of 10,000 cows and of 100 camels by Chaidya.[32] It appears that the gifts of the cows were praised by them because the Āryans were mainly a pastoral people and relied on livestock [cows mostly] for their sustenance. Gifts of food have been similarly extolled. "The foolish man (without sharing it with others) procures food purposelessly ; I say in truth, that this seeking would be his undoing ; he does not give food to gods nor to his guests ; a person who takes food alone commits a sin."[33] The *Ṛg-veda* (2.78) categorizes different kinds of gifts and the rewards they fetch. People who give cows as gifts attain to heaven ; those who give horses in gifts reach the world of the Sun ; donors of gold secure immortality and persons who gift clothes increase the duration of their lives. Gifts bring in return (for the donor) horses, cows, silver, gold, food, etc. The donors do not die. They attain immortality in heaven. They do not descend to hell. Neither are they harmed nor do they suffer pain. All the pleasures of this world and of the other await them.

Several law-givers and writers of Purāṇas have also highly praised the gifts of cows. Manu (4.231) mentions that a person, who gives a cow as a gift, reaches the abode of the Sun. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* also promises that a person who gives a cow as a gift receives all the fruit of this world that he may desire. All the sins committed in the previous seven births are washed away all at once.[34] "The sins committed in childhood, youth and old age by words, thoughts and actions or by eating the forbidden things or by going to forbidden places, or similar sins are removed when a cow made of sesaman is given in gift."[35] Yājñavalkya (1.204-205) and the *Agni Purāṇa* (21.30) prescribe that a gift-cow should have its horns and hoofs tipped with gold and silver respectively. She should be given away along with a metal vessel. She should be a mild tempered animal and at the time of the gift, she should be covered with a piece of cloth. The gift of such a cow should be followed by money, food and fees. A person who makes such a gift stays in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the cow's body. It is clear that the recommendation of a cow as agift with gold and silver hoofs, etc. were made by greedy Brahmins for themselves. Similarly Yājñavalkya, (1-206-7) the *Agni Purāṇa*

(210-33) the *Viṣṇu Dharmaśāstra* (88. 1-4) the Vana Parvan (200.69.71) etc. attach special importance to the gift of a cow when she is due to give birth to a calf and the donor is said to stay in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the body of the cow and the calf taken together.

The gifts of cows have been recommended and highly praised, not because there is any special religious sanctity attached to the cow, but because of its great utility for the recipient. This has been well explained in the "Anuśāsana Parvan" (83.17-18). It is said there that the cow is an important element in the sacrifice, that the cow nourishes human beings, that oxen are very useful as draught animals in agriculture, and, so the gift cow deserves the highest praise. As with the cow, gifts of land have also been highly praised by several writers. The *Vaiśiṣṭha Dharma-śāstra* (29.16), the "Anuśāsana Parvan" (62.19) and the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (4.164.18) mention that, whatever sin a man may commit when in difficult circumstances he is purified by making a gift of only as much land as is equal to a *gocarana.*

There is no need to repeat the other gifts and their rewards mentioned in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and other texts. Sufficient to say that all the necessary and desirable things of life are recommended by the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* for gift-giving to Brahmins. Attempts have been made to heighten the efficaey of the gifts through stories as was done in the case of *vratas.*

CONCLUSION

Conclusions, which we drew in connection with the *vratas*, apply to gifts equally and need not be repeated. Other conclusions which have no bearing on the subject of *vratas* are given below.

The prescribed quality and quantity of the gifts clearly show the greediness of the Brāhmaṇas. Their greed was not satisfied by horses, cows, gold, silver, food, cloth, etc., but they hit upon other means of improving their material prosperity. All things given in gifts must be accompanied by fees, otherwise the rewards derivable from the gifts decrease. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* has many stanza exhorting the donor to pay *dakṣiṇā* along with the gift. It maintains that, as long as fees are not paid with the gift, it cannot be regarded as complete. "*Dakṣiṇa* for every *yajña*, *dāna* or *vrata* should be paid immediately. No work is complete without fees."[36] "For performing a *yajña* the *dakṣiṇa* is eight coins of gold or seven coins of silver, while giving away a garden as a gift, the *dakṣinā* is two coins and while giving away a well as a gift the *dakṣinā* is half a piece of gold."[37] Thus it appears that the chief purpose of the gifts in the minds of the Brāhmaṇas was to collect more and more money from the people. It is stated, in a passage in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇas*, that the priests throw the Yajamāna into pits, snatch their money and make off with them just as robbers or freebooters or *niṣadas* waylay wealthy people in the forest, appropriate their money and thence take to their heels.[38] According to Janamejaya, Pārīkṣita, who is said to have made the above remarks about the tactics of these priests, was no better than those robbers. Hence he himself claims to have performed his sacrifices. The purely professional and selfish attitude is easily seen from the fact that the Brāhmaṇas were in search of a Yajamāna just as a craftsman was anxious for broken objects which he could repair or a doctor was desirous of patients whom he could cure. Just as a cart could not move without bullocks, a Yajamāna likewise could not prosper without paying the fees.

Gifts have helped to a considerable extent in developing philanthropic tendencies among the people. It is quite true that the gifts went to the Brāhmins, but it is also stated at various places that the poor, truthful and noble among them should be provided with gifts. At the time of giving gifts, it is expressly mentioned by various authors that the poor, the miserable and the hungry should be properly fed and clothed. Dakṣa mentions that a gift given to one's parents, *guru*, friend, to a man of good conduct, to one who has laid the donor under obligation, to the poor, to the helpless or to those who are virtuous lead to rewards. If gifts are given to undesirable people, to bards, to those who follow evil ways, to gamblers and deceitful persons, to *caṭas*, to *cāraṇas* and thieves, no good comes out of the action at all.[39] Similarly the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* recommends at a number of places that poor and needy Brāhmaṇas should be fed and gifts given them.

NOTES

1. Quoted by R.K. Mookerji in the Preface to his *Ancient Indian Fasts and Feasts*.
2. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. V, Part I, p. 1.
3. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, VII. II.
4. *Āpastaṁba Dharmasūtra*, II. 1. 1. 1.

5. *Śābara on Jaimini Sutras* VI. 2. 20.
6. *Vrata Prakāśa*, VII. 57.
7. P. V. Kane, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, Part I, p. 28.
8. *Agni Purāṇa*, 175. 10-11.
9. *Brāhma Purāṇa* 29. 61.
10. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, IV. 7. 1.
    यदेतत्त्ं समाख्यातं गंभीरं नरकार्णवम् ।
    व्रतोपवास नियमप्लवेनोत्तीर्यंते सुखम् ।।
11. *Garuḍa Purāṇa*, II. p. 869.
12. *Padma Purāṇa* III. 4. 27.
13. *Mahābhārata*, 106. 65-57.
14. *Agni Purāṇa*, 175. 44 & 57.
15. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* IV. 26. 28.
    इति पठति य इत्थं यः श्रृणोति प्रसंगात्सकल कलुषमुक्तः पार्वती लोकमेति ।
    यतिमपि च नराणां यो ददाति प्रियार्थं
    विपुल मति जनानां नायकः स्यादमोद्यम् ।।
16. *Ibid.*, 27. 26.
17. *Ibid.*, IV. 40. 41.
    मंदारषष्ठीं विख्यातामी प्सितार्थ-फलप्रदाम् ।
    यः पठेच्छृणुयाद्वापि सोपि पापैः प्रमुच्यते ।।
18. A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, p. 207.
19. P.V. Kane *op. cit.*, Vol. V, Part I ; p. 43.
20. A.S. Altekar, *loc. cit.*, p. 207.
21. V.S. Agrawala, *Matsya Purāṇa. A Study.*, p.174.
22. P.V. Kane, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, Part I, p. 55.
23. R.K. Mookerji, *A History of Indian Civilisation*, pp. 113-14.
24. Śābara on Jaimini Sutras, IV. 2. 28.
25. *Gita*, XVII. 20-22.
26. *Taittiriya Saṁhitā* VI. I. 6. 3.
27. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* IV. 151. 12.
    नोपभोगैः क्षयं यांति न प्रदानैः समृद्धयः ।
    पूर्वार्जितानामन्यत्र सुकृतानां परिक्षयात् ।।
28. *Ibid.*, 13.

29. *Ibid.*, 5.
किं कामेन सुपुषृेन वलिना चिरजीविना ।
यन्न सत्वापकाराय तज्जीवितमनर्थकम ।।
30. *Ibid.*, 11.
31. *Ibid.*, 9-10.
32. *Ṛg-veda*, VII. V. 37.
33. *Ibid.*, X. 117. 6.
34. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, IV. 151. 33-34.
35. *Ibid.*, IV. 152. 23-25.
36. *Ibid.*, II. 2. 3. 17.
37. *Ibid.*, II. 2. 3. 5.
38. VIII. II
39. IV. 17-18.

A list of *vratas* and the gifts appropriate to each such occasion along with a brief description of the attendant ceremonies and the dates of their occurrence according to the Indian as well as the Gregorian calendars are set forth in the following pages. This information, extracted principally from the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, has been augmented from other sources and is arranged in tabular form.

The following abbreviations have been employed in the table.

H.K.= Hemādri Caturvarga—Cintāmaṇi on Kāla.
H.V.= Hemādris *Vrata Kāṇḍa*.
K.K.N.= "Naiyatakālika Kāṇḍa" of *Kṛtya Kalpataru*.
K.K.V.= "Vrata-Kāṇḍa" of *Kṛtya Kalpntaru*.
K.N. = *Kālanirṇaya* of Madhava.
K.R.= *Kṛtyaratnākara*
N.S.= *Nirṇayasindhu*
P.C.= *Puruṣārtha Cintāmaṇi*
V.K.D.= Varṣakṛtya *Dīpaka*
V.R.= *Vratarāja*

Kār=Kārtika Mg.=Mārgaśīrṣa, Mṛgaśīrṣa Ps.=Pauṣa ; Māg.=Māgha ; Phl.=Phalguna ; Cat.=Caitra ; Vais.=Vaiśākha ; Jst.=Jyṣṭa ; Asr.=Āṣāḍa ; Sra.=Śrāvaṇa ; Bhd.=Bhādrapada ; Asv.=Aśvin ; Suk.=Śukla ; Kṛṣ.=Kṛṣṇa pakṣa; Suk.=Śukla pakṣa ; Prn.=Pūrṇimā.

Abbreviations for Purāṇas and *Upapurāṇas*.

Agni=Agni Purāṇa
Garuḍa=Garuḍa Purāṇa
Linga=Linga Purāṇa
Matsya=Matsya Purāṇa
Naradiya=Nāradīya Purāṇa
Padma=Padma Purāṇa
Śiva=Śiva Purāṇa
Vāmana=Vāmana Purāṇa

A. FASTS

Sr. No.	Name of the Fast	Date		Brief description	Special Direction if any	Reward	Parallel References
1	2	3		4	5	6	7
1.	Abhaya Pakṣa Saptami	Ps. 7-	Dec. 28	The Sun should be worshipped, a feast arranged and Brāhmaṇas fed.	—	One attains *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* *and* *mokṣa*.	
2.	Abhaya Saptami	Śr. Śuk 7	Aug. 13	—do—	—	One goes to the abode of Sun.	
3.	Acalsaptami	Māg. 7	Nov. 28	The god Nārāyaṇa should be worshipped through different object-symbols. Bath should be taken in undisturbed water.	—	One attains higher regions.	—
4.	Āāditybhimukhā	Māg. Krs. 7	July 28	—do—	—	The rewards increase many times, one becomes an emperor.	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Agastya	—	—	An icon of this ṛṣī should be made and worshipped.	—	Brahmins, Kṣatriyas Vaiśyas attain knowledge, kingship, wealth respectively	*Matsya* 61 *Garuḍa* 1 119
6.	Agni Caturthī	—	—	The god Śiva should be worshipped through different symbols.	—	One enjoys the company of gods.	
7.	Akhaṇḍadvādaśi	Mg. Sk. 12	March 18	The god Viṣṇu should be worshipped, gifts given and *mantras* chanted.	—	Removes the evil effects due to half hearted performance of other *vratas*.	*Garuḍa* 1.118 *Agnī* 190 *Vamana* 17
8.	Akṣaya Tṛitīyā	Vais. Śuk. 3	May 8	The god Vāsudeva should be worshipped with the aid of different symbols.	—	One attains the rewards of Aśvamedha Yajña	
9.	Aṅanga Trayodaśī	Māg. Śuk. 13	Dec. 19	Different gods should be worshipped.	—	All desires fulfilled.	
10.	Ananta Caturdaśī	—	—	Viṣṇu to be bathed in ghee and different parts of his body worshipped.	—	One blessed with versatile children.	Hm. II. 1-9 *Viṣṇu*. Dh. p. III. 150 1-5

1	2	3		4	5	6	7
11.	Ananta Caturdaśī	Bhd. Śuk. 14	Sep. 20	The Śiva should be bathed and worshipped.	—	All desires fulfilled	*Agni* 192 Hm. II p. 26-36
12.	Ananta Saptamī	Bhd. Śuk. 6	Sep. 13	Surya should be honoured.	—	One goes to the abode of Sun.	H.V. 1. 741. KKV. 141-49.
13.	Ananta Tṛtīyā	Māg. 3	Jan. 23	Before worshipping different gods, married women, widows and unmarried ones should wear red, yellow and white clothes respectively.	—	One attains to the reward of Aśvamedha.	*Matsya* 62. 1-3 *Padma* 5. 22. 61-104 KKV. 60-66.
14.	Aṅga-aṣṭamī	Mg. Krs. 8	Dec. 14	The ṛṣī Aṅga, his wife and children should be worshipped.	—	One attains all the pleasures of the world.	
15.	Aparājitā Saptamī	Bhd. Suk. 7	Sep. 13	Different gods should be worshipped, feasts and festivals arranged.	—	Victory in war.	KKV. 132-135. HV. 1.667-68.
16.	Araṇyadvādaśī	Mag. Śuk.12	Dec. 18	Viṣṇu should be worshipped and Brāhmaṇas fed.	—	A woman gets all happiness and attains *moṣka.*	H.V. 1. 1091-96

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	Ardrāndankarī	Asr. Suk. 3	July 9	Śiva and Pārvati should be worshipped.	—	All desires fulfilled.	
18.	Āśādaśamī	—	—	Viṣṇu should be worshipped.	—	Release from the bondage of birth and death.	H.V. 1. 977-81. V.R. 356-357.
19.	Aśūnya Śayana Vrata	Śra. 2	July 24	Fast should be observed for four months.	Only sweet fruits of the season should be offered to gods.	Couple remains eternally united.	K.K.V. 41-44 K.R. 225-228. H.V. 1. 366-71.
20.	Aśoka	—	—	Tree Aśoka should be worshipped with different objects.	—	Removes all diseases and worries.	
21.	Aśokā Pūrṇimā	—	—	The god Keśava to be worshipped and ollation of rice to a venerable person given.	Use of oil and salt is prohibited.	All griefs and sins are removed.	*Agni* 194. 1. H.V. 2. 162-64.
22.	Aviyoga	—	—	Worship of Gauri and Śambhu is enjoined upon the individual.	—	All desires are fulfilled.	K.K.V. 70-75 H.V. I. 439-444. K.R. 452-455.

1	2		3	4	5	6	7
23.	Aviyoga Tṛtīyā	Mg. Śuk. 3	Feb. 6	Different gods should be worshipped in different months.	—	Couple remains united.	
24.	Bhīmā Dvādaśī	Mg. Śuk. 12	Dec. 18	Various limbs of Viṣṇu should be honoured with different names.	—	Removes all the individual sins.	*Matsya* 69 K.K.V. 354 H.V.I. 1044-49.
25.	Bhīsmapancaka	Kark. Śuk. 11	Nov. 17	—do—	Avoid liquor, meat and speaking falsehood.	Bestows progeny, washes away sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa.	*Agni* 205.1.9.
26.	Bhadra Saptami	—	—	Gods should be worshipped. After the fast one should eat food cooked by one's sister.	—	All sins washed away.	*Garuḍa* 1.123. Kn. 330. H.V. I.483.
27.	Bhadra	—	—	Image of sun should be bathed in ghee and milk and then worshipped.	Sleep during the day and contact with evil people are forbidden.	One goes to the abode of sun.	KKv. 13-8-141 H.V.I. 671-73.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	Bṛhada	— —	Different gods to be worshipped. Fast to be observed each month.	—	washes away all sins.	—
29.	Budhāṣṭami	— —	Golden Buddha to be worshipped, gift given to, Vrata to be observed eight times.	—	Previous seven births recollected.	VVK. 39-40 H.V. 1.866-73. VR. 255-65.
30.	Caturthī	4th of every month	Brahmā and Ganeśa to be worshipped.	—	Attainment of earthly riches.	KKV. 77-87 HV.501-36
31.	Daśavatāra	Bhd. Śuk. 10 Sep. 16	Viṣṇu should be worshipped. Fast to be observed for ten years.	—	Release from bondage of birth and death.	HV.I.1158-61.
32.	Dharani	— —	Nārāyaṇa should be worshipped and Brahmaṇas fed.	—	Victory.	KR. 426-30 HV. I. 1041-44.
33.	Dhvjanavmī	Ps. Śuk. 9 Jan. 14	Goddess Bhagavatī to be worshipped with flowers.	—	One stays in heaven.	HV. 1.891-94.
34.	Durgandha Nāśana	Jst. Śuk. 13 June 18	Worship trees favoured by the sun.	—	Removes bad odour of the body.	HV. 2.14-16.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. Durgāṣṭamī	Bhd. Śuk. 7	Sep. 13	Durgā to be worshipped wearing clean clothes and Brāhmins fed.	—	Heaven	HV. 1.873-75 KKV. 239-41.
36. Gaurī	Bhd. 2	Aug. 25	Images of Gaurī and Śiva to be honoured.	Use of salt is prohibited.	The fruit of heavens.	
37. Goṣpada Trītiyā	Bhd. Śuk. 3	Sept. 9	Cows should be worshipped.	Oil, salt and cooked food prohibited.	One attains the abode of cow.	HV. 2.323-26.
38. Govatsadavādaśī	Krk. Krs. 12	Nov. 9	A cow and a calf should be worshipped.	Practise celibacy and sleep on the floor.	—	HV.1.1180-90.
39. Gobinda-dvādaśī	Puṣ. Suk. 12	Jan. 17	Feed the cows and eat food made from milk or preparation thereof.	Avoid eating salt.	Heaven.	KV. 468 HV. I.109-97.
40. Govinda	Asr. Suk. 11	July 17	Viṣṇu should be worshipped.	—	Many rewards.	HV. 2.801-13.
41. Graha dakṣtra	—	—	Idols of the *grahas* be worshipped.	—	Evil effects of *grahas* moved.	

1	2		3	4	5	6	7
42.	Harakāli	Bud. Suk, 3	Sep. 9	Kāli should be worshipped.	—	Health, wealth and wealth and children.	HV.1.435-39.
43.	Hṛdayaditya vana	—	—	Sun god to be honoured in many ways	—	Attainment of worldly desires.	
44.	Janmāṣṭami	Bhd. Krs. 8	Aug. 30	Kṛṣṇa and Devakī to be worshipped by all *varṇas*.	—	Place in the abode of Viṣṇu.	
45.	Jāti-Smara	Bhd. 4	Aug. 26	Different gods should be worshipped.	Silence to be observed until the moon rises.	Recollection of previous birth.	
46.	Jayanti Saptamī	Mg. Suk. 7	Dec. 13	Gods to be worshipped, feasts and festivals to be arranged.	—	Release from all sins.	
47.	Jaya	—	—	Sun to be worshipped.	—	Rewards manifold.	
48.	Jaya Saptamī	—	—	—do—	—	Fulfilment of wordly desires.	HV.1.717-20.

1	2		3	4	5	6	7
49.	Kāmada	Mg. Suk. 6	Dec. 12	Sun to be worshipped	—	Fulfilment of wordly desires	
50.	Kukkutī	Bhd. 7	Aug. 29	Śiva and Pārvatī to be worshipped. The sanctified thread for all life should be worn.	—	Children delivered from a premature death.	VKK. 319.
51.	Kalyāṇa-Saptamī	7th of every month		Sun-worship, Brāhmin-feeding and gift-giving.	Bathe in cow's milk.	All diseases cured.	*Matsya* 74. HV. 1.638-40.
52.	Kāmapradadityāna	—	—	Sun-god to be worshipped.	—	All desires fulfilled.	
53.	Kamalā Saptamī	—	—	—do—	—	A place in the Sun.	Kr.119-21.
54.	Kamalāśaṣṭhī	—	—	—do—	—	—do—	
55.	Kārtikeya śaṣṭhī	Mg. 6	Dec. 12	God Kārtikeya to be worshipped with different objects.	Eat 12 kinds of fruits in 12 months.	Kings attain victory.	HV.I.596-600.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. Kāravīra	—	—	Kāravīra tree should be worshipped.	—	Attainment of all desires.	
57. Kokilā	—	—	Worship Gauri Kokilā made of gold, fast and Brahmins feeding.	—	Increases marital love	N.S. 108-9.
58. Kṛttikā	Krk. Purṇ.	Nov. 21	The idol of Kṛttikā should be worshipped and donated to Brāhmins.	—	One stays in the abode of *nakṣatras*.	HV.2.191-93.
59. Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī	Mg. Kṛṣ. 8.	Dec. 14	Different gods to be worshipped in different months and different kinds of food to be taken.	Celibacy and control anger.	Place in Śiva's abode.	KKV.241-45.
60 Lalitā śaṣṭhī	Bhd. Suk. 6	Sep. 12	Goddess Lalitā to be worshipped ; Brāhmaṇas and kanyās fed.	—	—do—	VR.220-21.
61. Lalit tṛtīya	Mg. Śuk. 3	Feb, 7	Different goddesses to be worshipped. and gift of white clothes to Brāhmin and red to his wife.	Sleep on a bed of Kuśa-grass.	One gains wealth and children.	

1	2	3		4	5	6	7
62.	Madana dvādaśī	Cat. Śuk. 12	Apr. 17	God Hari to be worshipped with music and songs.	—	deliverance from sins.	KKV.367-68. HV.I. 1194-98.
63.	Madhūka tṛttīyā	Phl. 3	Feb. 22	Worship of Gaurī and *madhuka* tree is enjoined upon the individual.	—	Male Progeny.	HV.I.413-15.
64.	Mahasaptamī	Mg. Śuk. 7	Nov. 13	Sun-god to be worshipped.	—	Place in the abode of the sun.	HV.1.659-60.
65.	Mahājaya Sapatamī	—	—	—do—	—	—do—	KKV.135-36. HV. 1.669.
66.	Mahāśvetāḍityavana	—	—	—do—	—	—do—	
67.	Malādvādaśī	Krk. Śuk. 12	Nov. 17	Viṣṇu to be worshiped.	—	One is blessed with cows and buffaloes.	HV.1·1115-17.
68.	Mandāra-śaṣṭhī	Mg. Śuk. 6	Dec. 12	Worship sun with *mandīra* flowers.	—	One is born in to a good family.	HV.I.606-8.
69.	Manoratha-dvādaśī	Phl. Śūk 12	March. 18	Viṣṇu is worshipped, with flowers and other objects.	—	All desires fulfilled.	HV.I.1072-75.

1	2	3		4	5	6	7
70.	Mārtāṇḍa-Saptamī	Ps. Śuk. 7.	Jan. 12	Sun is worshipped with chanting *mantras*.	—	A place in the abode of Sun.	HV.I.754-55. KKN.147-48.
71.	Meghapāli tṛtīyā	Asj. Kṛṣ 3	Sep. 25	Different gods should be worshipped.	—	Redeemed from sins.	
72.	Nāgapañcamī	—	—	Idols of snakes should be bathed in milk and worshipped. Fast to be observed for one day.	—	Fear of snake-bite is removed.	HV.I. 557-60.
73.	Nakṣatra-puruṣa	—	—	God Vāsudeva to be worshipped alongwith different Nakṣatras.	—	The couple attains beauty.	*Matsya*. 54. KKV. 400-04. HV. 2.699-08.
74.	Nakta	8th & of Every	14th month	Worship of Śiva	—	One quits the world contentedly.	*Ling6* 1.83.3-54. *Nārada* 2.43.11-23
75.	Nanda-Saptamī	Mag. Śuk.	Dec. 13	Worship of the Sun	—	Heaven	KKV.136-137. HV.669-871.
76.	Nārijana	—	—	—	—	,,	
77.	Nikṣubhārka	—	—	—	—	,,	
78.	Pañchaśitī			Here 85 fasts are mentioned most of which are included in this list			
79.	Pāpanaśinī Saptamī	—	—	Worship of the Sun	—	Freedom from all sins.	KKV.145-146. HV.I.740-741.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
80. Pāli	—	—	Vāsudeva to be worshipped. One should eat food uncooked by fire.	—	Accretion of enormous wealth.	
81. Phala-Saptamī	Bhd. Suk 7	Sept. 13	Worship Sun god with different objects.	Control senses & anger.	Riches for the poor.	KKV.204-205. HV.I.701-702.
82. Phalatyāgi	Mag. Śuk 14	Feb. 18	Śiva to be worshipped & Brāhmaṇas fed.	Fruit is forbidden.	Sins washed away.	HV.2.906-909. KKV.436-439.
83. Pūrṇa-manorathī	Phl. Prn.	Mar. 21	Nārāyaṇa & Lakṣmī to be worshipped.	Speaking with a liar, the wretched or an atheist are forbidden.	All desires fulfilled.	
84. Pūrṇa-	—	—	An image of Vāsudeva to be bathed in *ghee* consecrated and worshipped.	—	—do—	*Agni* 194 KKV.374.85.
85. Putraka ditya vāna	—	—	Viṣṇu to be worshipped.	—	Sins destroyed.	HV.2.171-172.

1	2		3	4	5	6	7
86.	Rahasya Saptamī	—	—	Sun god should be worshipped with different objects.	Avoid oil blue clothes meat, etc.	All worldly aspirations.	
87.	Rambhā	Mag. 3	Jan. 23	Different gods should be worshipped.	—	—do—	
88.	Rambhātṛtīya	—	—	—do—	—	—do—	HV.I.426-30. KN.176.
89.	Rasa Kalyānī	—	—	Goddess Durgā to be bathed in *ghee* and worshipped.	—	All sins removed.	KKV.66-69. HV.2.461-65.
90.	Ratha-Saptamī	Mg. Śuk 7	Dec. 13	Sun god with his car and charioteer to be worshipped. Feeding of Brāhmins and giving of gifts.	—	One ascends to a higher caste.	KV. 101. HK.624.
91.	Rogahara ditya vāna	—	—	Worship of sun with different flowers is enjoined upon the devotee.	Take milk diet and slsep on uncovered ground	Cured of all diseases.	KKV.20-21. KR.600-01.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
92. Rohiṇī	Srn. Kṛṣ. 11	Aug. 7	Rohiṇī to be worshipped fast to be observed for 10 years.	—	All wordly pleasures.	HV2.598-99.
93. Śāmbhārayaṇī	—		A silver image of this goddess to be made and worshipped.	—	Secure possession of wealth.	HV.2.659-65.
94. Samprāpti dvādaśī	Ps. Krs. 12	Jan. 2	Viṣṇu worship feeding of Brāhmins and giving of gifts.	—	Heaven.	
95. Sampūrṇa	—		,,	—	It removes the defects or want of *śraddha* of other fasts.	HV.2.876-79.
96. Sankrāntī	—		Sun-worship feeding of Brahmins and giving of gifts.	—	Long life & good health.	HV.727-43. VVK:204-31. KN.331-46.
97. Śāncaturthī	Mg. Śuk	Dec. 10	Worship of Gaṇeśa.	—	Absolved from the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa.	HV.I.513-14.

1	2		3	4	5	6	7
98.	Śānti	Krk. Suk. 5	Nov. 11	Worship of Narāyaṇa is enjoined upon the individual.	Eating of sour things for one year is prohibited.	Peace in family resorted.	KV. 96-97 HV.I.556-57.
99.	Saptamī	7th of every month		Sun-worship	—	All diseases cured.	*Matsya* 74. KKv. 103-225. HV.I.632.810
100.	Sarasvatī	—		Goddess Sarasvatī to be worshipped, fast to be observed for 13 months.	—	One becomes learned.	—
101.	Śarkarā-saptamī	Aśv. 7	July 29	Sun-worship. Brahmin-feeding and gift-giving.	Bathe in milk and wear white clothes.	Attainment of heaven.	—
102.	Sarvārtha-saptmī	Mg. Krs: 7	Jan. 27	,,	Use of oil and salt prohibited.	,,	—
103.	Śambhu-tṛtīyā	Ct. Śuk. 3	April 8	Śiva and Pārvatī is to be worshipped and gifts given.	—	,,	KKV.75-77 AV.1.479-80

1	2	3		4	5	6	7
104.	Saumyāditya Vāna	—		,,	—	All desires fulfilled.	*Matsya* 101 KKV: 441.
105.	Śāka-saptamī	Krk. Śuk: 7	Nov. 13	,,	—	,,	—
106.	Siddhā-ratha-saptamī	—	—	Worship of sun image.	—	Victory.	KKV.172-80. HV.I.679-85.
107.	Śiva	Bhd. Śuk. 4	Sep. 10	Gaṇeśa should be worshipped and gifts given.	—	Obstacles overcome.	HV.I.512-13.
108.	Śiva-nakṣatra puruṣa	—	—	Different limbs of Śiva should be worshipped.	—	All sins washed away.	HV.2:703-06.
109.	Snapana-saptamī	—		Different gods to be worshipped during different months.	—	All sins washed away.	
110.	Śaniś-cara	—		Ṛṣi Pipalada to be worshipped, fast to be observed for 1 year on every Saturday.	Oil-offering to *graha*	Long life and good health, evil effects of *graha* are removed.	

1	2	3		4	5	6	7
111.	Somāṣṭami	—		Śiva and Umā to be worshipped.	—	*Mokṣa.*	HV:1.833-35
112.	Saravaṇadvādaśī	Bhd. Śuk. 12	Sep. 18	Viṣṇu to be worshipped.	—	All desires fulfilled.	HV.I.116-17 KV; 459-64.
113.	Śravaṇikā	Mg. Śuk. 14	Feb. 11	Śiva-worship.	—	One quits the world contedly.	
114.	Śrī Paṇcamī	Mg. Śuk. 3	Dec. 4	Lakṣmī to be worshipped, with flowers and fruit. Fast to be observed every month for one year.	—	One goes to the abode of Laksmī.	HV:1.537-43:
115.	Śṛī	Bhd. Śuk. 9	Sep. 15	Bilvaka tree should be worshipped.	Use of oil and salt prohibited.	Release from pain.	HV.1.887-88.
116.	Śuklacaturthī	—		Gaṇeśa to be worshipped. Golden image of god to be gifted to the Brāhmins.	—	Release from the sin of killing a Brāhmin.	
117.	Śukradvādaśī	Ph. Śuk. 12	Mar. 18	Viṣṇu worship.	—	One abides in heaven.	HV.1.1079-81.
118.	Sūrya			Sun-worship.	—	Free from disease.	KKV·388-89. KR.475-76.

1	2	3		4	5	6	7
119.	Tāraka-dvādaśī	Mg. Suk. 12	Dec. 18	Viṣṇu worship.	—	One is freed from the sin of killing enemies.	HV.I.1084-89.
120.	Tilaka	—		Worship with *tilaka* on forehead	—	Evil people flee from the *tilaka*.	HV.I.348-50 VR·54-56.
121.	Trivarga-saptamī.	Ph. Śuk. 7	Mar.13	Sun-worship.	Avoid contact with evil people.	Heaven.	
122.	Tṛtīyā	—		Sun god to be worshipped.	—	One realises all objects of unordained devotion:-*dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*.	
123.	Ubhaya-saptamī	7th of every month.		,,	—	A place in the abode of the sun.	KKV.159-60. HV I.748-53.
124.	Ulkā-dvādaśī	Mg. 12	Feb. 1	Viṣṇu to be worshipped.	—	Cured of disability or disease like deafness, dumbness and leprosy.	
125.	Ulkā-navamī	Aśv. Śuk. 9	Oct 16	The goddess cāmuṇḍā should be worshipped with a rich variety of oblations.	—	Divests evil people from one's path and weapons do not cause hurt in war ?	HV.I.895.

1	2	3		4	5	6	7
126.	Umā-maheś-vara	Mg. Śuk 3	Feb. 7	Golden image of Śiva and silver image of Pārvatī should be worshipped.	—	Boons of progeny and wealth for women.	HV.2.691-93 KKV.414-416
127.	Vaṭa-savitrī	Bhd. Śuk: 13	Sep. 19	The fast should be observed for three days. Story of Sāvitrī and Satyavān cited for relevant moral.	—	The couple remain eternally united.	HV.2.258-72.
128.	Vibhūti-dvādaśī	Vsk. Mg. Asr. Phl. 12	May 2 Dec. 3 July. 3 Mar. 3	Viṣṇu to be worshipped through a wealth of oblations.	—	Freed from sins.	KKV.364-68 HV.1.1057-60
129.	Vijaya	—	—	*Mantras* to be chanted in honour of sun-god.	—	Rewards increase manifold.	VKK.9 HK.625 KKV.349
130.	Vijayā-ditya purṇīmāvara	—	—	Moon-worship.	Meat and liquor forbidden.	One achieves fulfilment of all one's desires.	
131.	Vijaya	—	—	Sun-worship through a variety of votive offering.	—	One abides in heaven.	KKV.127-29 HV.I.663-64

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
132.	Viśoka-śaṣṭhī	Asv. 12 Oct. 4	Meat and liquor forbidden.	—		
133.	Vijaya-Śrāvaṇī	—	Viṣṇu to be worshipped with oblations.	—	All desires fulfilled.	
134.	Vināyaka-caturthī		Gaṇe's to be worshipped.	One should eat sesame and perform havana with it.	All obstacles removed.	KKV.79 HV.I:519-20
135.	Viśoka-dvādaśī	Aśv: 12 Oct. 4	Viṣṇu to be worshipped.	—	One abides in heaven.	KKV·360-64 Matsya 81
136.	Vrintāka		Golden *vrintāka* should be worshipped and given away to Brāhmins.	—	One who makes this gift never goes to Yama loka.	HV.2:909-10
137.	Yama-darśana	Mg: Śuk. 13 Dec. 19	Feeding of Brāhmins and giving of gifts.	—	One never sets eye on Yama.	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
138. Yama	—	—	Yama should be worshipped, sisters honoured and gifts given.	—	All worldly desires fulfilled.	
139. Yuga	Vs. Śuk. Krk. Śuk. 9	Mar. 8 Nov. 15	Śiva and Pārvatī to be bathed and worshipped.	—	All physical, mental and moral ills driven away.	HK.649-55. 147-48 Nārdīya 1.56

B. Gifs

Sr. No.	Name of gift	Quality	Rewards
1.	Cow	A good and beautiful cow with a calf should be presented to a learned and a poor Brahmin.	One remains in heaven for countless days.
2.	Cow of Sesamum Indicum	After plastering the earth a cow of sesamum with golden hooves should be made and given as gift to Brahmins.	One resides in the abode of Brahmā. All sins are washed away.
3.	Similarly, efferings made should be worshipped.	of water, ghee, salt, gold, jewels	and the cow giving birth to a calf
4.	Brișabha (Ox)	A good, strong, beautiful and young ox should be given away as a gift.	Sins of seven generations are washed away.
5.	Mahişī (Buffalo)	A good buffalo giving milk should be gifted to a Brahmin.	All one's worldly desires fulfilled.
6.	Land	After performing due ceremonies, it should be gifted to Brāhmaṇas. It must also be accompanied by suitable fees.	One who has made a gift of land has given the utmost. All sins are disappeared.
7.	Svarṇa-bhūmi (Golden Land)	A figure of a plot of land made of gold should be given in gift.	One gets a place in the abode of Viṣṇu and after it, one becomes an emperor.

	1	2	3
8.	Halapaṅkti (Plough)	A paṅkti consisting of 40 bullocks made of gold and set in the jewels should be given to the Brahmins.	One attains to heaven and stays there for seven generations.
9.	Āpāka	One thousand utensils should be given away as gift.	One gets sons, servants and riches.
10.	Gṛha (House)	A beautiful house attractively adorned should be given away as a gift.	One goes to the abode of Śiva.
11.	Anna	The hungry and needy should be properly fed.	One goes to the abode of Viṣṇu.
12.	Sathāli	A kettle of copper or clay should be made and different kind of eatables put in it and given to Brāhmaṇas after uttering ceremonial mantras.	The food in the house of the donor never gives over.
13.	Dāsī	A maid-servant properly adorned with ornaments and clothes should be given to a Brahmin.	One attains to heaven and is served by *Apsarās*.
14.	Prapaā	A stand for providing drinking water should be made under a shady tree. The Pitchers should be covered at. A Brahmin shou'd give water to the travellers.	One goes to heaven.

	1	2	3
15.	Agnīṣṭikā	A fire should be made morning and evening in the winter for everyone in the home to warm themselves by.	All desires fulfilled.
16.	Vidyā	A book, golden pen, and silver inkpot should be given to Brāhmaṇa for writing with and then placed in the temple. Brāhmaṇa should teach the devotees different branches of knowledge.	It includes the rewards which one gets for giving away a cow, gold, etc., in gift.
17.	Tulāpuruṣa	The person, for whose sake the *vrata* is being performed, wearing good clothes and having arms like swords, etc. should be weighed against cereals, curd, gold etc. One half of it should be given to Brāhmaṇas, one fourth to to *ṛtvikas* and a fourth to the needy and poor. The person can also be weighed against silver, salt etc.	One goes to the abode of the Sun.
18.	Hiraṇyagarbha	A golden image draped in beautiful clothes should be given to Brāhmin, A hungry should be fed and the teacher given *dakṣina*.	One goes to heaven.

	1	2	3
19.	Brahamāṇda	A golden Brahmāṇḍa should be made. All gods, people etc. should be set up on it and consecrated. Meru should also be made. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva should be seated on top of the egg. Corn, umbrella, shoes, etc. should be placed be placed infront of the idol and then given away to Brahmins.	All desired objects are obtained. All sins are washed away.
20.	Kalpavṛkṣa	A golden tree with golden branches and fruit should be made, properly worshipped and given to Brahmins.	One resides in the abode of the sun and enjoys the company of *apsarās*.
21.	Kalpa-latā	A latā should be made and properly worshipped with flowers, etc. and given away as gift.	All desires fulfilled.
22.	Gaja-ratha Aśva-ratha	A beautiful chariot with golden flags should be given as gift after a festive ceremony.	One gets rid of all one's sins.
23.	Saptasāgara	Seven *kaṇdas* of salt, milk, *gur*, curd, etc., should be made and different gods established in them and then given to Brahmins	One gets rid of all one's sins.

	1	2	3
24.	Śayyā	A cot should be given as gift to a Brahmin.	One goes to heaven.
25.	Bhuvana-pratiṣṭhā	A skilled artist should paint a *bhauma* on a white canvas. All gods, rivers, hills, birds, etc. should also be painted. It should be placed in a *kuṇḍa*. Dance, music should follow it. Brahmins should be revered gifts given to them.	All gods, *asuras*, *nagas*, etc. are propitiated.
26.	Nakṣatra	The names of 28 nakṣatras are mentioned.	Different gifts have been recommended for the Brahmins.
27.	Tithi	The names of different *tithis* are given along with their different gifts and rewards.	
28.	Varāha	The idol of Varāha should be made, properly decorated and given away	one goes to the abode of Viṣṇu. the Brahmins.
29.	Dhānya-parvata	The names of ten *parvatas* like *gur*, gold, *ghee*, etc. are given. It is recommended that the ten hills be decorated with ancillary, *mantras* should be chanted and then gifts should be given to the Brahmins. One gets different rewards of different gifts of the *parvatas*.	
30.	The gifts of mountains made of salt, cotton, silver, jewel, etc. have been given separately. Other minor gifts mentioned in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* are : Mahābhuti, Ātma-prati- kṛti, Hirṇya, Hirṇaya-aśva-ratha, Hemahasti, Viśva-cakra, etc.		

CHAPTER VIII

TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

Surroundings of Temple

The Indian temple was the hub of social and religious life in ancient times. Cleanliness and the beauty of the surroundings were highly valued. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* states that gods like to reside in those places which have lakes, wells, flowers, trees and melodious notes of royal swans.[1] In the words of Stella Kramrisch, "The gods always play where rivers have for their bracelets the sound of the flight of curleys and the voice of swans for their speech, water as their garment, carps for their zone, the flowering trees on their banks as ear-rings, the confluence of rivers as their hips, raised sand-banks as breasts and the plumage of swans, their mantle."[2]

Aims of Building a Temple

The building of a temple was regarded as a sacred act. It was meant to enhance one's name and respect in society and one's eligibility for a place in Heaven. The rewards gained by the performance of sacrifices and public works were equal to the rewards which one attain by building a temple. "One wishing to enter the world attained by performing sacrifices and sinking wells and the like, should build a temple, whereby one should get the fruit of both."[3] "Throughout the ages, the Hindu temple has been built with fervour of devotion, the *bhakti*, as a work of offering and pious liberality in order to secure for the builder a place in Heaven. The Hindu temple is a *tirtha* made by art."[4]

Selection of Site

The examination of the site for building a temple was of primary importance. The quality of land was of great significance for the builder. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* states that "the land where we get coal, hair, stones, bones, etc. is not fit for the erection of a temple".[5] "The land where all types of seeds can grow and which produces the sound of a cloud or drum by striking, is good land."[6] The *Matsya Purāṇa* maintains that, for judging the quality of the land, many seeds should be sown. If the seeds sprout in 3, 5 or 7 days, the land is of superior, middle or inferior quality respectively. The echoes of the caste system are also heard in the maxims laid own for determining the suitability of the site for building a temple. We learn that different types of land are considered suitable for the construction of temples for the members of different castes. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and *Matsya Purāṇa* state that white, red, yellow and black colours of the land are good for Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras respectively.[7] Even the taste of the earth is taken into account while building a temple. "For Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, the taste of the earth is sweet, [a]stringent, pungent and bitter respectively. The importance given to the colour, mentioned above, is due to the fact that the complexion of Brāhmaṇas was white, emblematic of purity and holiness ; that of the Kṣatriyas was red, colour of the blood, symbolic of battle and martial spirit ; that of Vaiśyas was yellow, the colour of gold emblematic of commerce ; that of the Śūdras was black, the colour of the non-Āryan low class people signifying ignorance and dirty habits."[8] The *Matsya Purāṇa* gives another method for determining the kinds of land suitable for different castes. It states that a big pit should be dug, cleaned and plastered properly. Four burning wicks pointing in the four directions should be put in an earthen lamp containing *ghee*. If the wick on the eastern side burns longest, it is auspicious for Brāhmaṇas ; if the southern, western, and northern wicks burn longest, it is auspicious for Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras respectively ; if the wicks burn together, it is good for all *varṇas*. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* provides us with an alternative test. "A pit should be dug and filled with earth dug from it. If the pit is filled completely and some earth is left over, it is of good quality ; if the pit is filled with the earth that has been excavated from it, it is said to be of medium quality, if the pit remains unfilled with the same earth, then it is of inferior quality."[9] A similar method of judging the solidity of the ground is mentioned in other works also. "Dig out a pit one cubit deep in the ground and again return the earth into it. If the earth more than fills the pit, then the ground is good, if it is just sufficient, then it is middling or indifferent, while if it falls short, the ground is bad."[10] The ground to be avoided, according to Mānasāra, is that which has the form of a circle, a semi-circle, resembling a trident or a window, which is shaped like the hinder part of fish or the back of an elephant or a turtle, or the face of a cow, and the like...abounding with human skulls, stones, worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed woods, coal, dilapidated walls, subterranean pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, husks of corn, exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies. fishes, etc. ; such a place should be avoided at all costs.[11] Similar instructions have been provided by different writers.[12] The object of all these directions is to find an eminently suitable and appropriate site for the temple.

Construction of Temple

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, as already pointed out, is devoted to the Sun-god, so we find here a brief description of the temple dedicated to this god.

The gate of the said temple should face the east.[13] If that is not possible, it should face the west. The bath and *agnihotra* should be erected towards the south and north of the chief temple respectively. Temples dedicated to Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu should be erected to the northern, eastern and western sides of the Sun-temple respectively. The shrines dedicated to Nikṣubhā should stand on the right side and that of Rājñī on the left. Similarly, the shrine of Piṅgala should find its place on the southern side, of Daṇḍanāyaka on the left and that of Śṛī and Mahāśveita in front of the Sun-temple. The shrines of Aśvinikumāras, Rājña, Srośa, Kālmāṣa, Māṭhara, Kubera, Revanta, and Vināyaka should also be made in different directions. Two *maṇḍapas* meant for the purpose of giving *argha* should be built on the left and right sides. At the rising of the sun, the *argha* should be offered up from the right *maṇḍapa* and at sunset, from that of the left *maṇḍapa*. Diṇḍi should stand before the Sun. Near the Sun-temple we should make a separate place for the sky and also for the reciter of the Purāṇa. "The image of the Sun-god, according to Āgamas, is also to be placed in the centre of the planets looking eastward. Round, red and decorated with flowers, he must be clothed in garments of variegated colours with flags on his car. The car must have one wheel, be drawn by seven horses and be driven by the charioteer Aruṇa who is represented without legs. The Sun is supposed to be a Kṣatriya (sometimes a Brāhmaṇa) born of the sage Kaṣyapa. He is the Lord of Kalinga country, wears a mail armour and robes in the northern fashion. According to the *Matsya Purāṇa*, he is represented as seated (or standing) on a lotus seat, having lotus flowers in his hand and is ever engaged going round and round the mountain Meru. His banner is the lion. This is the description of the Sun as the chief of planets. But within the flaming orb is recognised the god Nārāyaṇa, whose body is golden, who assumes the form of Brahmā in the morning, Maheśvara in mid-day and Viṣṇu in the evening. In this composite form he is seated on a lotus pedestal with crocodile ear-rings and a crown and exhibits in his hands the conch and the discus and all the characteristic weapons of the Trimūrti.

"Sūrya is also supposed to be the manifested form of the three Vedas, and sole supporter of the universal space, resplendent in his car, surrounded by his consort, planets and the celestial damsels. Twelve different forms of the Sun (and sometimes 32) are described—one having red light, another white light and so on." Stella Kramrisch[15] states ; "The Sun-temple *garuḍa,* houses the image of Sūrya in the central building. It is flanked in the lateral shrines by Daṇḍa and and Piṅgala or by Saturn and Yama or by Keśava (Viṣṇu) and Śiva. This is its primary destination. In it, however, other gods too were enshrined along with their lateral divinities. They are : Candra, the Moon, Kāma, Indra, Yama, Varuṇa and Kubera. They are connected with, and substituted for, Sūrya. Garuḍa himself, the bird-form *vāhana* of the Sun, has also his image enshrined as the main divinity ; he is flanked by Kaśyapa and Vinatā."

Sūrya and his attendants are placed not only in the stead of gods of the Sun's family but the three gods, Brahmā, Śiva and Vasudeva also replace the solar icons. "The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* states that Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu's bodies are the same as the body of the resplendent Sun, whose special nature is threefold indeed. "May the Sun be gracious." It is likely, therefore that this type of triple shrine (at Kosara) which contains, three shrines for Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva were in reality the temple of Sūrya whose worship was very popular in Gujarat in the 14th century A.D." Vāsudeva may be accompanied by Rudra (Śiva) and Brahmā or also by Garuḍa and Ananta or also by Garuḍa and Aruṇa, the *vāhana* and the charioteer of the Sun. Sūrya, the Sun-god, is represented by thirteen fragmentary plaques, eleven from AC III and two from AC VII. All the AC III specimens are from stratum III, sub-strata a, b and c, proving that the iconographic forms furnished by these rounded plaques prevailed between A.D. 450 and 750. A detailed study of these plaques revealed the following special features.

(i) The plaques are circular with the upper half occupied by the deity and the lower half by an array of seven horses.

Several specimens of similar large circular stone-images have been found in the Mathura school of sculpture which it should now be possible to assign to the period of these plaques.

(ii) The horses are shown standing erect on their hind legs, the one in the centre treated frontally and the three on each side shown in three-quarter profile : In no. 98 (b) the horses, trapping include side straps girth band, head fly-whisks and a rope round the neck.

[(iii) The Sun-god and his attendants stand on a chariot. Its single wheel is shown between the hind legs of the middle horse. Above the horse's head is a raised platform covered with a flowery mattress serving as the seat of the deity.

(iv) An attendant human figure, holding a lasso or a long rope with a slip knot, a part of the equipment of the Sāssanian soldier, is shown on the plaque ; *cf.* nos. 97 and 98 (b).

(v) The Sun-god wears Northern dress consisting of buttoned, sleeved coat, trousers and padded boots. The costume of the figure in no. 102 is specially noteworthy, being studded all over with streaks of pearls, each streak consisting of four pearls. This was a special variety of costly clothing material known as *stavaraka.*

(vi) In front of the Sun-god is a small figure of his charioteer, Aruṇa.

(vii) On the right and left of the Sun-god stands a female figure holding a bow stretched in the attitude of shooting, apparently representing the twin goddesses Uṣās and Pradyota Uṣā (or Rājñi, and Nikṣubhā according to the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*) discharging arrows of light to dispel darkness ; *cf.* nos. 98, 98 (a) 99 b 100. The female figure on no. 98 is wearing a high canonical cap and a long cloak continued down to the ankle, apparently an Iranian female dress.

(viii) "A little below the goddess apper two attendants, Nāga figures, one on each side of the horses. It is said the Nāgas who are sons of Kadrū, the goddess of darkness, enveloped the solar horses until they were chased by Garuḍa.

Thus a full-fledged iconographic formula of the Sun-god is presented in the *terra cotta* plaques from Ahicchatra. The solar image in the Kuṣāṅa period represents Sūrya clad in the same style

TWENTY TEMPLES

Acc. 2 Viśvakarmā Prakāśa VI.82.107 ; Bṛhatsaṁhitā, LV. 20-31 : Matsya Purāṇa CCLX 28-56 ; Bhaviṣya Purāṇa CXXX 24-37 ; Samarāṅgaṇasutradhāra LXIII 1-34.

Names	Shape of ground plan (No. of sides area).	No. of Storys Bhūmi	In cubics Hastas Width	height	Sikharā	Anda	Srag	Garbha	Dyara	Praggriva	Kuh-ara	Gava-kṣa	Jala	Candra śāla	Vala-bhi
1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Meru	6	12, 16*,16	32; 50	64	Several	—	100	Andh-arikā	4	All	many	—	—	—	—
2. Mandāra	6	10, 12*	30,45,40	60	1	—	—	—	—	Prāsādas have prāggrīvas and Toraṇas	—	—	—	—	—
3. Kailāśa	6	8, 9,*10	28,40,16	56	1	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—
4. Vimānacchanda	6	8	21,34*,12 or 20	42	many	—	—	—	4		—	Gava-kṣa	Jalas		
5. Nandana	6	6	32,30*,30	64	—	16								on both sides*	
6. Samudra Samudga	16 circular	1, 2*	8*	16		1									
7. Padma	16.8 Petals	1, 3*	12**,20*,19 12 or 20												
8. Garuḍa II ,, III ,,	Shape of Garuḍa With 6 wings and tails ,,	6, 7, 1 8*6* 10*, 12*	24,10 or 8	48		20								3*	
9. Nandī	Garuḍa without wings and tails	7	24,32*,32*	48		20									
10. Gaja-Kuniara	Elephant back	7,6**	16	32		1									
11. Gṛha Rāja Guha Raja	Guhā Cave	1	16	32		1								3* many	Vala-bhi
12. Vṛṣa	Circular	1, 2*, 3*	12.20*	24		5,1	1	4 Hastas						3	
13. Haṁsa	Haṁsa with beak, wings, tail, eliptical	1	.12.10*	24	many		1							3 candra śāla	Vala bhi
14. Kumbhaghaṭa	Kalaśa (jar)	1,9	16	32		5	1								
15. Sarvatobhadra	Square 16	5	26,30*,30	52	many	many									
16. Mṛga-Siṁha	rāja 12 round	1,6*	8,16.12			1				4					
17. Vṛtta	Circular	1	20*,12	1				Temples 17-20 No light walls around Garbha		large					
18. Caturasna Vāvṛkṣat-Catuṣkoṇa	Square	1	8			5				One door in the West				candra śāla	
19. Ṣoḍaṣāśra	16	1. 2**	26		many	1		pratimā of jewel.							
20. Aṣṭāśra	8	1. 3	28			1									

alternative figures in the various texts are indicated by the sign which denotes the respective passage, for example ; *Matsya Purāna.** The description of *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* however, are valid also in the other texts where no alternative statement is tabulated. The** refers to *Vāyu Purāṇa* where it differs from *Matsya Purāṇa.*

but seated on a chariot of two or four horses and without either the twin goddesses or the Naga attendants and the lesser bearer. An important[feature] in these plaques is the absence of two acolytes, Daṇḍa and Piṅgala, who should figure as attendants of Sūrya, dressed like him in coats and trousers. They already appear in the Mathura sculpture of the Gupta period, and also in the marble Sūrya image of the fourth century A.D. from distant Khair Khanch near Kabul, Afghanistan. Their absence in the Ahicchatra plaques is inexplicable."[18] From this discussion it can be safely concluded that there are differences in opinion over the numbers and names of the deities which should be housed in the main temple of the Sun.

Types of Temples

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mention 20 types of temples along with their measurements. These have also been adverted to by other writers as well. Stella Kramrisch[15] has tabulated them as shown below.

Conclusion

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, as is clear from the above discussion, lay emphasis on attractive and neat surroundings of the temple. Particular and pointed attention was paid to the selection of the site for the temple. Many ways have been prescribed for the examination of the ground on which the temple was to be built. The rewards to be gained by putting up a temple have been much publicised. Thanks to the propagation of such ideas and incentives, it appears that there was considerable architectural activity among the people. Besides the temple of the Sun, the shrines of some other gods are also commended in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. These shrines formed a part of the temple of the Sun. Twenty types of temples, along with suggested dimensions, as stated by other authors, have also been incorporated in this Purāṇa. "The twenty temples form the nucleus . . . of each variety and its ramifications. Some of these, widely dealt with by the texts, have not survived as actual buildings. So vast is the 'ocean of the science of architecture' and so rich in form that Viśvakarmān, quoted in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* 1. CXXX, 36, does not appear to exaggerate when he is said to have spoken of three thousand kinds of temples of various shapes."[19]

NOTES

1. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1. 130. 10-15.
2. *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. I, ed. 1946, p. 4.
3. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1. 130. 9.
   इष्टापूर्तेन लभते लोकांस्तांश्च विभूषितान् ।
   देवानामालयं कार्यद्वयं यत्र च दृश्यते ।।
4. D. N. Shukla, *Hindu Science of Architecture*, Vol. I ed. 1958, pp. 455-56.
5. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1. 130. 43a.
   शर्करातुष केशास्थिक्षारांगारविवर्जिता ।
6. *Ibid*., 43b.
   मेघ दुंदुभि निर्घोषा सर्वबीज प्ररोहिणी ।।
7. 1. 130. 44.
   शुक्ला रक्ता तथा पीता कृष्णा च कथिताक्षिति : ।
   द्विज राजन्य वैश्यानां शूद्राणां च यथाक्रमम् ।।
8. B. B. Dutt, *Town Planning in Ancient India* ed. 1925, p. 57.
9. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1. 130, 47.
   समे समगुणा ज्ञेया हीनेहीन गुणा भवेत् ।
   वर्धमाने तु वै पांसो भवेद् वृद्धिकरो क्षितिः ।।
10. B.B. Dutt, *op. cit*., p. 58.
11. *Ibid*., p. 51.
12. i. P.K. Acharya, *The Architecture of Mānasāra*, ed. 1933, p. 18.
    ii. Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. I, ed. 1946, p. 14.
    iii. D.N. Shukla, *op. cit*., Vol. I, ed. 1962, p. 264.
13. The theory of orientation of buildings...consist in setting them in plan in such a way that they may secure the maximum of benefit from the solar radiation automatically and irrespective of the fact whether occupants will it or not. Temples, living places, assembly halls, audience rooms and a host of structures to meet the needs of men of all grades, are thus so adjusted in plan as to secure an eastern frontage." D. N. Shukla, *op. cit*., p. 183.
14. H. Krishna Shastri, *South Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses*. p. 234;

15. *Stella Kramrisch*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 422-23.
16. A.K. Majumdar, *Calukyas of Gujrat* p. 381.
17. Stella Kramrisch, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 270 A.
18. V.S. Agrawala, *Ancient India*, No. 4, pp. 128-29.
19. *Stella Kramrisch*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, ed. 1946, p. 275.

CHAPTER IX

ICONOGRAPHY

Kinds of Images

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mentions images made of seven materials: gold, silver, copper, stone, earth, wood and canvas.[1] According to the *Matsya Purāṇa*, an image can be made of the following materials: gold, silver, copper, precious stone, stone, wood, the eight metals or *aṣṭadhātu*, an alloy of bronze and other metals, and an alloy of copper and bronze.[2]

The images made of different materials bring different rewards, which, according to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*[3] are given below :

Material	*Reward*
i Wood	Longevity and riches
ii Clay	Pleasures in all worlds
iii Jewel	Prosperity
iv Gold	Strength
v Silver	Fame
vi Copper	Children
vii Stone	Landed property and plenty.

According to D.N. Shukla the rewards gained by making icons from different materials are as under :[4]

i Gold	Health
ii Silver	Fame
iii Copper	Progeny
iv Stone	Landed property and victory
v Wood	Longevity
vi Lekhya	Wealth
vii Lepya	Wealth

Selection and Cutting of Trees

The authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* mention only the images made out of wood. As an image is of great sanctity, due care was necessary for the cutting of wood out of which the image was to be made. The advice of astrologers should be sought on the auspicious time and, after performing the ceremony prescribed for that purpose, the individual should go to the jungle to cut the wood. The cutting of certain trees like thin trees, trees standing in temple ground or graveyards, trees on which many birds perch or rest, trees disfigured by storms, fire, lightning, elephants, etc., those having one or two branches, those having their front part dried up, those in which the rot has set in or which break after the tree falls off, those from which honey, ghee, oil or blood exude on cutting, etc. are not good for making an image from. The reason of avoiding such trees is quite obvious. The wood for the image should be of superior quality because the latter is meant to have a long life. An image made out of defective and poor wood is soon broken or spoiled. Trees[5] like the sandal, *devadāru*, *bilva*, *nimba*, etc. are good for making an icon from. Similar instructions have also been given by *Śilpaśāstra* texts. The account given in Vārāhmihira's *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* (Chapter 58) exactly corresponds to that found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.

Dimensions of Icon

The following is a description of an ideal image of the Sun as given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*:

> The image of the Sun measuring 84 *aṅgulas* is superior. The length of the face is 12 *aṅgulas*. A third of the face is the chin and the remaining is nose and forehead. The length of the eye is two *aṅgulas*. A half of the eye is the retina and a third of the retina is the pupil. The length of the forehead is 32 *aṅgulas*. The length of the nose is equal length of the neck. Arms [and] forearms, the legs and thighs are of equal length. The length of the feet is six *aṅgulas* and the breadth is four *aṅgulas*. The toes and their nails are comparatively smaller. The shoulders, chest, thighs, eyebrows, forehead, nose and cheeks should be raised up. The image should have broad and big eyes, a lotus-like face, red lips, head with an ornamented crown and adorned with jewels *kuṇḍala*, garlands, wearing *avyaṅga*, holding a lotus and a golden necklace in hand. The *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* (Chapter 57. 46-48) specially enjoins that "the god should be dressed in the fashion of a northerner, i.e. his body from the feet up to the breast should be covered. He should wear a crown and hold two lotus flowers by their stalks.

His face should be adorned with ear-rings, he should wear a long necklace and an *avyaṅga*... His face should be covered with a plate."[7] According to Gopinath Rao,[8] "In sculpturing the image of the Āditya, attention has been paid to the instructions that the nose, the forehead, the chest, the knees, the thighs and the neck all be raised and prominent, the diameter of the hollow should be twice the height of the *kirita*. If the figures be made so as to be one cubit height, it would be Saumya-mūrtī, that is, a handsome gentle figure ; if it is to be two cubits, it would be productive of wealth, if of three or four cubits, it would bestow happiness and prosperity." His great chariot has one wheel and is drawn by seven horses. He has a lotus in each of his hands, wears an armour and has a shield over his breast, has beautiful straight hair, is surrounded by a halo of light, has good hair and apparel, is decorated with gold (ornaments) and jewels, has on his right side a figure of Nikṣubhā and on the left Rājñī (queen) with all sorts of ornaments and whose hair and necklace are bright. His chariot is called by the name of Makaradhvaj. He wears a crown. The figure is surrounded by a halo. Daṇḍa (Yama) is represented as one-faced and Skanda as being a bright conch shell. Varāha on a lotus is placed on a horse. His body is represented as lustrous and he is the one giver of light to all worlds."[9] According to Agarwala[10] "an image (Sūrya) represents an unique example of Piṅgala, Sūrya's attendant holding a pen in the right hand and an inkpot in the left and clad in a Kulah cap and Iranian coat. Another example which reflects the inter-course with the Pārasīkas (Persians) is an important bust which wears frizzled bushy hair, a bearded chin, knotted scarf and cuirass." Stella Kramrisch gives the following measurements of the type of image having 7 *talas* i.e., 84 *aṅgulas*.

Face=12 *aṅgulas* ; neck=3 *aṅgulas* ; neck to the horizontal line connecting the nipples= 9 *aṅgulas* ; From there to navel= 9 *aṅgulas* ; navel to genitals= 9 *aṅgulas* ; thigh = 18 *aṅgulas* ; knee=3 *aṅgulas* ; leg= 18 *aṅgulas* ; foot =3 *aṅgulas* ; Total = 84 *aṅgulas*.

According to the *Matsya Purāṇa*[12] "the image of Sun should be seated in a chariot with one wheel and drawn by seven horses. In his two hands lifted to the shoulders are held two lotuses. He wears a different kind of *mukuta* and his body is covered with a coat or sometimes he may be "painted on" with a pair of garments. The hint is that the image was dressed from the Kuṣāṇa period onwards for about five hundred years in northern dress consisting of a coat, trousers and thick boots. Gradually the features were Indianised and the northern dress began to be replaced by the Indian style of drapery. Because of [the] wearing [of] boots the convention started that his feet should not be shown as they are inauspicious". According to the *Aṁśumadbhedāgama* and the *Suprabhedāgama* the figures of the Sun-god should be sculptured with two hands, each holding a lotus. The hands should be so held up as to cause the first holding the lotuses reach the level of the shoulders. His hand is to be surrounded by a halo and his person should be adorned with many ornaments ; on his head, there should be a *mukuṭa* and the garments worn by him should be red in colour. He should wear a pair of ruby ear-rings and over his chest, there should be a *hāra* (necklace). He should wear only one cloth and the body should be covered (with a coat) as in Northern India. The fabric of the coat should be so delicate in texture as to make portions of the body visible through it. There should also be a *yajñopavīta* on his person. The figure of Sūrya should be made to stand on a *padma pītha* by itself or should be placed in a hexagonal chariot drawn by seven horses fully caparisoned. The chariot should have one wheel and be shown to the driven by the lame Aruṇa. On the right side of the Sūrya, there should stand Uṣās, and on the left Pradyota."[13]

It appears from the above that the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* adhered to the Iranian influence by stating that the images of the Sun should be shown as wearing an *avyanga*.

The height, breadth and proportion of the different parts of the body and distance between them, mentioned above, are part of a manual of specifications for image-making. "The Indian system of proportionate measurement of the body of the image is based on the number, organically correlated to the body of man and its main divisions, a face length being the module."[11] The image, the centre of devotion and the presiding deity of the temple, whose importance has been stated above, must show the high workmanship of the maker. "After all the artist cannot fashion out images just from his own imagination though the element of imagination is very necessary. A model is indispensable for any such creation of art . . . Varāhamihira's *dictum* regarding the display of the drapery and the decoration of the images in consonance with those prevalent in a country among men and women themselves, perhaps needs some traditions, . . . that the forms of the images too must conform to the forms prevalent among mankind."[15] Misfortunes befall the artist who fashions defective images. "If any part of the image is larger than the required one, there is a danger to the kingdom, if it is smaller, there is a danger of disease. If the belly is big, there is fear of hunger, if it is too thin, there is a danger of poverty ; if it is cracked, there is a danger of war ; if it is broken, there is a danger of death ; if it is bent on the right side, the age is shortened ; if it is bent on the left side, it leads to separation between husband and wife ; if the vision in the eyes of the image is [tilted] upwards, the maker will become blind ; if it is shown [to be] downwards, its maker, will be surrounded by many difficulties."[16]

An image of Sūrya has been installed at Paraśurāmeśvara temple at Guḍimallam in Madras State. Its uplifted hands are shoulder high and from the features of the face and the peculiarities of its modelling in general; this image may belong to the seventh century A.D. Another image of Sūrya has been found in the Śiva temple at Melacheri near Kāveripākkam and belongs to the later Pallava period. Here Sūrya may be seen standing upon a flat seat under which are worked out the seven horses and the driver, Aruṇa. At Ellora the Sūrya is seen standing within a chariot drawn by seven horses and driven by Aruṇa. In Challagarh there is another Sūrya image, seated cross-legged in his chariot with seven horses and driven by Aruṇa. Around him are to be seen the figures of the goddess Rājñī, Suvarṇī, Suvarchasā, Chāyā and also the figures of Daṇḍa. and Piṅgala. Another image of Sūrya found at Ajmer wears a curiously shaped *kiriṭa mukuṭā* with a flat top. The hands are placed at the level of the hip and a lotus with a long stalk is held in each of them, the flower itself being level with the shoulders. Other images of Sūrya are to be found at Haveri in Dharwar district, Belūr, Junagaḍh and the Madras museum. "The Sūrya 56 cm. high, from Harishchandrapuram in Tanjore district stands in the same *bhaṅga* pose just like Viṣṇu. The view might be taken that both are more or less identical in conception. In fact Sūrya is also called Sūrya Nārāyāṇa. Noteworthy features of the excellently modelled and highly proportionate bronze are the nimbus behind the head, the characteristically tapering *karuṇḍa mukuṭa*, the shoulder decoration on the right side only ; rather heavy *kanṭhas*, beautifully swaying *yajñopavīta*, ornate *siṁha-mukha* on the waistband the looped sash, and realistically depicted bows and ends of cloth on either side. More interesting than these are the lotuses held in the two hands. They are exceedingly realistic in workmanship and may be said to be superb specimens of their kind. The manner in which the figures holding them are depicted is also beautiful. Added to these, the *padamāsana* on which the figure stands is also a good specimen of its kind. In short, this figure is not only interesting from the point of view of iconography but also a remarkable work of the period to which this figure belongs."[17] "Another Sūrya bronze image found in the Tamil country is akin to the above. "But the atrophical, canonical *karūṇḍa-mukuṭa*, a series of thick necklaces, the unnaturally carved *yajñopavīta* and the prominent anklets on the legs are proofs positive for its later date than the former. The modelling of the figure is superb and the proportions are beautiful. The pedestal is also worked tastefully and this is apparent in the workmanship of the Padamāsana."[18]

Conclusion

We gather then that the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* follow the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* with regard to instructions and rules for the making of icons. The preliminary details with regard to the auspicious time for the cutting down of good trees and avoiding certain other trees for the purpose of making idols, are common to both. It is quite true that Indian ideas are adopted from elsewhere and that the foreign influence is clearly visible. That the wearing of *avyaṇga* has been recommended by the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is further literary evidence for the same view. The proper measurements of the various parts of the Sun as specified in this *Purāṇa* ought to be carefully observed if for no other reason than that this Purāṇa is devoted to him. This Purāṇa itself is exacting in its requirements because, as it claims, disproportionate images tend to bring several misfortunes on its maker. Many popular superstitions of these who had some experience of building such temples have been incorporated in the *Purāṇa*.

NOTES

1. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1. 131. 2b, 3a.
कांचनी राजती ताम्री पार्थिवी शैलजा स्मृता ।।
वार्क्षी चालेख्यका चेति मूर्तिस्थानानि सप्तवै ।।

2. V.S. Agrawala, *Matsya Purāṇa : A Study*, p. 335.
3. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1. 131. 5-8.
4. D. N. Shukla, *Hindu Canons of Iconography and Painting*, Vol. II, ed. 1958, p. 94.
5. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. 1. 131. 10-11.
   मधूको देवदारुश्च वृक्षराजश्च चन्दनः ।
   विल्वश्चाम्रातकश्चैव खदिरोथाञ्जनस्तथा ।।
   निम्वः श्री पर्णवृक्षश्च पनसः सरलोर्ज्जुनः ।
   रक्त चन्दन पर्यन्ताः श्रेष्ठाः स्युः प्रतिमाद्रुमाः ।।
6. D. N. Shukla, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 102.
7. J. N. Banerjee, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, ed. 1950, p. 437.
8. Gopinatha Rao, *Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part II, p. 307.
9. Nagendra Nath Vasu, *op. cit.*, p, xvi.
10. Agarwala, *Handbook of the Sculpture in the Curzon Museum of Archaeology*, Mathura, p. 52,
11. *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. II, ed. 1946, p. 310.
12. V. S. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, p. 361.
13. T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-7.
14. Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. II, ed. 1946, p. 311.
15. D. N. Shukla, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 83-4.
16. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, 1. 132. 27b, 28. 29.
17. P. R. Srinivasan, *Bronzes of South India*, p. 305.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 232-33.

CHAPTER X

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The economic data, given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, are very meagre and incomplete. This Purāṇa mentions only the wages of some categories of labourers.

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* prescribes that the dues of a workman, in consideration of the work done by him, should be paid to him.[1] Nārada (VI.II,3) also maintains that a hired servant should be paid wages regularly. It may be paid at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the work. Manu prescribes the same thing by stating that the labourers should be paid fully on the completion of their work. Similar ideas have been expressed by Kauṭilya when he states that, "Cultivators or merchants shall, either at the end or in the middle of the work of cultivation or manufacture, pay to their labourers as much of the latter's share as is proportional to the work done."[2]

What is to be done when the wages are not fixed previously ? The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* maintains that, in such circumstances, the wages of the different parts of the work done should be calculated separately and the sum of the amounts paid to him. Nārada holds that, when the wages have not been fixed, the servant shall take one-tenth of the profit derived from the work or the trade.[3] Kauṭilya also agrees with Nārada when he states that, "As to the wages not previously fixed, the amount shall be fixed in proportion to the work done and the time spent in doing it. Wages being previously unsettled, a cultivator shall obtain one-tenth of the crops grown, a herdsman one-tenth of the butter clarified and a trader one-tenth of the sale produced". Bṛhaspatī is more liberal. He (XVI.I-II) states that a servant of a cultivator is entitled to one-fifth of the crops plus food and clothing or one-third of the crops only.

The wages chart, as given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, (II-II.3,4-40) is given below :

Nature of work and their wages

Brick-making 2 *Paṇas* a day ; Digging a well—2 Paṇas ; Making a stage 1 *Paṇa* a day ; Making bridges 2 *Paṇas* a day ; cleaning a place daily 1 cowrie ; Making things out of copper 4 *Paṇas* a day ; Making things out of bronze 3 *Paṇas* a day ; General work 1 *Paṇa* and one Kākiṇī ; Making floor of marble 1 *Paṇas* of gold ; Drilling of hole in a gem 1 Kākiṇī ; Making things of marble more than 4 cowries ; Making bronze utensils 3 *Paṇas* ; Milking a cow 4 cowries ; Making cloth 3 *Paṇas* ; Making cloth of wool 10 Kākiṇīs ; The work of blacksmith and hair cutter 10 Kākiṇīs Shaving 2 Kākiṇīs ; Decorating women 1 *paṇa* and 1 Kākiṇī; Hair dressing 4 *paṇas*; Planting rice 1 *paṇa* daily Planting betel nuts and chilies 1 *paṇa* daily ; Making a plough 2 *paṇas* and 10 cowries ; Pulling a vehicle 1 *paṇa* and 10 cowries ; Washing ordinary clothes 1 *paṇa* ; Washing big clothes more than one *paṇa* ; Urgent washing of clothes 1¼ or 1½ times more than the figure settled on ; Washing of woollen clothes more than one *paṇa*.

1. *The Relative Value of Cowrie, Kākiṇī and Paṇa*

From the rate of wages given above, we may infer that the cowrie (*Kāpardaka*), *Kākiṇī* and *paṇa* are the three media of exchange used by the authors of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. The *Līlāvatī* states that twenty cowries are equivalent to one Kākiṇī, four of Kākiṇīs make one paṇa, 16 paṇas are equal to one dramma, 16 drammas represent one niṣhka.[5] Similarly the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* states that 80 cowries are equal to one paṇa.[6] Evidently the paṇa used by this Purāṇa is of copper. The wages of the labourers, it may be safely said ; were paid in the form of copper paṇas.

2. *Economic Conditions of the Labouring Classes*

Before we discuss the economic condition of the labourers as given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, it will not be futile to trace the brief history of the conditions of such classes during the preceding ages. The *Jātakas* throw some light on the poor conditions of such classes, "In the *Serivanaja Jātaka*, a free woman, who earned her living by working as a domestic drudge in the house of a neighbour, is described as living from hand to mouth and unable to save anything with which she could buy from the hawkers articles for her only dependent grand-daughter. In the *Kuṇḍakapuna Jātaka* a free labourer of Śrāvasti is described as making both ends meet with great difficulty and when other citizens decided to make a corporate gift to the monks, he decided to present Buddha with a cake prepared with the fine husk of rice which only he could offer."[7] From *Gangamālā Jātaka* (No. 421) we find that a male and a female water-carrier used to earn half a maṣaka per day, while from the *Viskava Jātaka* we learn that a Śreṣṭhī, having been reduced to bankruptcy, took to the work of a grass-cutter and earned two *maṣakas* a day out of which he intended to give away one *māṣaka*, keeping the other for himself, which he thought would fetch sufficient food for him and for his wife for a day. In the *Sutanu Jātaka* a labourer is described as earning one half to one *māṣaka* a day with which he somehow maintained himself and his mother. Even if the *māṣaka* referred to in the above three Jātakas be a silver one, it is apparent that the price of the necessaries of life must have been very cheap so that half *māṣaka* of silver was sufficient for one man for one whole day."[8] But there was great poverty. "In the *Mahasara Jātaka* (No. 92) an inhabitant of a *janpada* says that he has never seen (that is to say possessed) in his life a chair or bedstead... Thus the condition of a labourer must have been poor."[9] But we find some improvement in the economic conditions of these classes in the period of the *Arthaśāstra*. "The daily wages of a labourer ranged, between one *māṣaka* (one sixteen *kārṣāpaṇa*) and half *māṣaka* (one thirty-two *kārṣāpaṇa*). Of course one *māṣaka* could fetch enough quantity of food and grocery and a small quantity of ghee or oil for single person and some times frugal persons enjoyed some other petty amenities, e.g., a garland, perfume or drink with a part of it, yet it is patent that they were hard pressed."[10] It is also known that the picture of economic conditions of the labouring classes in the Gupta age as testified by different authors is not very encouraging. "The living was far from easy for the labourer, poverty and want prevailed side by side with opulence and plenty, and the number of persons reduced to dire straits was by no means small."[11] Varāhamihira in his *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* refers to the numerous instances of general poverty and misery of the people from the pernicious combinations and influences of the stars and planets. He also refers to several instances of famine or other natural calamities. Certainly there predictions must have had some relationship to the socio-economic life of the people of the time, and so we cannot ignore them as mere fancies. Under such circumstances starvation stricken people had to earn money by hard labour, by acts of torture and by lower acts. Most of them had to 'pass their days in servile work and had to do low services'. We can presume that their number were gradually increased by perpetual supply from the landlesss and destitute.

Moreover the position and the security of the unskilled hanp who worked from door to door on short-term service was perhaps in many respects worse then that of a slave. Paid servants are not always granted the facilities which slaves sometimes enjoy. The amenities of the master's were not for them. In early literature, however, we have references even to Brāhmaṇas and respectable householders taking to servile occupations under the pressure of poverty. But the majority of hired labourers probably came from the socially degraded classes in whom 'the profession of hired labour was as much hereditary as the poverty connected with it.''[12]

A comparative study of the daily wages of the labouring classes given by other authors will help us in assessing their conditions as given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*. The following is a tabulated statement of the wages of daily labourers and government servants, *circa*. 625 A.D. (Nepali table given by Professor Levi).

Nature of work and their Wages 1. Manual workers and servants 1½ copper *paṇa* a day; 2. Officiating priest 1½ copper paṇa a day ; 3. Personal attendant —do— ; 4. Water-carrier 1 copper paṇa a day ; 5. Palace servant —do— ; 6. Door-keeper 2/3 copper paṇa a day ; 7. Street watchman —do— ; 8. Sweeper —do— ; 9. Cowherd 1 copper paṇa a day ; 10. Soldier —do.

The wages per day of the labourers as given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* ranged between one paṇa and one Kākiṇī to four *paṇas*. These wages are higher than those given in the list above. Manu (VII. 126) prescribes that the wages of the lowest menial (say a sweeper or one who fetches water) is one *paṇa* (copper) a day and of a superior menial six paṇas (copper) a day and that the former was to get in addition a pair of garments every six months and one *drona* of corn every month. Pāṇinī mentions workers receiving five, six or ten silver *Kārṣāpaṇas* per month. He also mentions a labourer working for one *padika* (one fourth of a *Kārṣāpaṇa*) a day i.e. seven and-a-half *kārṣāpaṇa* a month.[13] In the Gupta Age, the conditions of the labourers remained poor in spite of the fact that there was a rain of gold in that kingdom and the higher classes rolled in wealth. This enormous wealth was not shared by the labouring classes.

NOTES

1. II. i . 32a.
   यस्य यज्ञस्य यन्मानं तत्तु तनैव योजयेत् ।
2. Sastri, *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra* (Eng. Trans.) p. 210.
3. II. ii. 3.27.
   आचार्यार्द्धंशतः कश्चित्क्षीणवित्तं समाहरेत् ।
   अमूल्यं वर्णमूल्यं यद्भवेद्वै दक्षिणोत्तमा ।।
4. Sastri, *Kauṭilya Arthasāstra*, (Eng. Trans.), p. 208.
5. H.C. Banerji (Eng. Trans. ed. 1927), 1.2.
   वराटकानां दशक द्वयं (२०) यत सा काकिणी ताश्व पणश्चतस्तः ।
   तेषोडश द्रम्य इहावगभ्यो द्रम्पैस्तथा षोडशभिश्चनिष्कः ।।
6. II. ii. 3;4.
   अशीतिभिर्वराटैश्च पण इत्यभिधीयते ।
   तैस्तु षोडशभिर्ज्ञेयं पुराणां सप्तभिस्तु तैः ।।
7. S.K. Das, *Economic History of Ancient India*, ed. 1944, p.251.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 272-273.
9. S.K. Das, *Economic History of Ancient India* ed. 1944, p. 279.
10. Buddha Prakash, *Studies in Indian History and Civilisation*, p. 185-187.
11. S.K. Maity, *Economic Life of Northern India in the Gupta period.*
    9 ed. 1957, p. 148.
12. Pran Nath, *A Study in the Economic Conditions in Ancient India*, ed. 1929, p. 145.
13. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini* ed. 1953. p. 237.

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10. *Varāha Purāṇa*
11. *Agni Purāṇa*
12. *Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*
13. *Liṅga Purāṇa*
14. *Padama Purāṇa*
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